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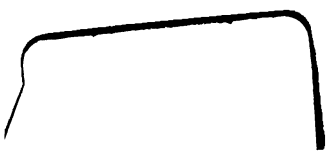
ISAAC NEWTON STEVENS



* PUBLISHERS WEEKLY FEB ' '

WHAT IS LOVE?

BY
ISAAC NEWTON STEVENS
AUTHOR OF
"THE LIBERATORS"
"AN AMERICAN SUFFRAGETTE", ETC.

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WHAT IS LOVE?

WHAT IS LOVE?

CHAPTER I

THE AUTHOR FINDS VARIOUS PHASES OF LOVE IN THE RED SEA

It was our first night out from Suez and the heavens were giving us a glimpse of their inexhaustible store of myriad-colored phantasies that daily were to enthrall us while we remained in the far east.

A party of us were making a leisurely cruise of the oceans that lie eastward from New York to "the other side of the lantern," with a due amount of land incursions to observe the countries whose shores were washed by these various seas.

This was just prior to the beginning of the Great War.

Two men, who interested me greatly, had taken passage on our boat at Suez for Bombay.

I had met them a few evenings previously at a dinner in Cairo given to me by my friend Abdel

Hamid Abaza Bey, who was at that time Chief of the Agricultural Department of the Egyptian Government. One of these men was a noted American Mining Engineer and the other was a successful western lawyer who had recently moved his headquarters to New York City.

Andrew Young was the name of the engineer and George Burnett that of the lawyer.

I was pacing the deck with Young when we came upon his friend leaning on the deck rail and completely absorbed in watching a Red Sea sunset.

"Waxahachie!" exclaimed Young to him.

"Wax-a-hach-ie!" Musically but sadly the vowels and syllables rolled out in response from the throat of the other man.

I cast a glance of interrogation at Young for the meaning of this cryptic conversation.

His countenance put on a cynical smile, as he replied: "One more good man gone wrong on the woman question."

"A suffragist?" I inquired.

"Worse than that; much worse. I greatly fear he really believes in love and that, too, after years of association with me and an algebraic diagram given him when a boy by his famous doctor-uncle who tried to demonstrate to him that only once

in a million cases does the X of masculine passion equal the Y of feminine avarice, in such degree that a man and a woman might comfortably live together as husband and wife."

Young was so much in earnest with his apparent attempt at mathematical humor that I scarcely knew whether to laugh or to ask questions. Instead of doing either—I smiled incredulously.

"He used to listen to me, but not since that Waxahachie affair. Why, do you know, he wanted to turn back at Cairo and not go to India, where we have most important business. I quoted from one of Victor Hugo's characters to shame him: 'Men are women's playthings; women are the devil's.' "

I was getting interested, for here was material for some sort of a story and I was gleaning in that field at the time.

I feared to interrupt Young with questions lest my curiosity might cause him to be more secretive. So I gave him marked and respectful attention.

"Do you believe in love?" He turned suddenly full toward me and his eyes, more than his voice, hissed the words.

"Why—yes——" I stammered, as the vision of gorgeous blue eyes set in a dainty face miraged on the ocean.

"What sort of love? But then the world has only one kind. The amorous man beguiled by the charm of some woman bent on possessing a life of comparative ease and comfort. She is taught this from childhood. 'You must marry, marry, marry' is ding-donged into her ears from the innocence of the cradle to the tragedy of the altar. Nothing is ever said to her about the manner of man she must marry—but, 'you must make a desirable match'; 'desirable' always meaning one where she can loaf on the job and have leisure to play double with her spouse. He may be an idiot, or budding with germs of insanity, or filled with detestable diseases, but what does that matter so long as he can offer more than she has been accustomed to, and he, poor fool, if he really be a man free from moral and physical taint, as our friend there is, is fascinated into the meshes of this courtship without having one chance in ten to escape. And we call this sort of thing 'love, divine love, poetic love'! Bah! It is untrained lust on one side and craven sordidness on the other."

When he had finished, all semblance of even a misogamist's smile had disappeared from his countenance. He was deadly in earnest and I wondered what tragedy in his own life had given birth to these sentiments.

"Your friend," I ventured, "looks most interesting to me and I am certain his romance would be quite worth hearing."

Young's countenance softened—every line of pessimism disappeared. He cast a really affectionate glance toward Burnett.

"He is as true as steel and as manly as he is true."

Young paused a moment and gave his cigar the tighter grip in his teeth which some men do when debating a subject. Presently he said:

"Abaza Bey told me that you write stories and that you are on this trip for material for a new book. You will never find such an instructive story anywhere on earth as Burnett can tell you, if he will. I'll help you if he is disposed to talk, but you must get his confidence fully, first, which will be comparatively easy, for he is favorably impressed with you. He is not the solemn ass that the disciple of Blackstone sometimes affects or quite often is.

"I have but one request to make,—tell his experiences exactly as he gives them to you, for few men have made the emotions and temperamental defects of individuals do team work with the philosophy of right living as Burnett has. It may save many young men for useful lives, in-

stead of driving them into the infamies of married life, as most books do these days." He paused, but I showed interest for more, and he continued:

"I tell you matrimony is like the big hotels the world over. The moment you cross the threshold of one of these hostelries, you become a victim, not a guest. The whole tribe of tip-seekers and graft-hunters is turned loose upon you without mercy. So it is with marriage. No man is a husband, however much he may parade himself as such. He is just the poor, weak, helpless victim of a skilled parasite. I concede the feminine system is more subtle than that of the hotel landlord, but the result is identically the same. In his cheerful egotism man seldom sees in either case just what a hopeless idiot he is."

"Come, come," I said, "you are looking at the world through very green goggles to-day."

His glance softened and his eyes rather glowed with kindly sentiment, as he replied:

"I know I am always misunderstood when I discuss these questions, but my own experience and researches have so disgusted me with the hypocrisy and criminality of the whole matrimonial arrangement that I cannot restrain my feelings when talking about any phase of it. My friend, there, began life with his eyes wide open and under the

guidance of the doctor-uncle I referred to, and his experiences are really worth while. He has a sanguine and poetic temperament and I don't believe he has become the least bit cynical. His story is an unusual one, and since he has written it in letter form for his uncle, perhaps you can get a copy. It might start some young people into the world with eyes and ears keyed to keen observation and understanding, and thus drop a pearl or two into the dark and boundless sea of sex ignorance and folly. It may be that you also prefer to follow the beaten path so generally traveled by American Authors and Publishers and not wish to give anything to the public on the subject of love that is not sickly sentimental piffle. If so, Burnett will not interest you in the least."

Young excused himself to join his friend and I paced the deck for some time, meditating upon what I had just heard.

Before I left America, I had counted on setting a romance somewhere in India, perhaps around the Taj Mahal, or in the jungles of the Himalayas, or possibly amidst the tropical splendors of Ceylon or Java. Here I was confronted with a wholly different atmosphere and theme, both of which I reasoned I might get at home.

Young's manner, as well as the education and

wide knowledge of the man, convinced me, however, that this was not a mere, superficial, sex tale, such as those with which the public had already been surfeited.

I had, myself, investigated these and kindred subjects rather thoroughly, but never having been able to blaze a path from the labyrinth of mental underbrush into which such researches took me, I had invariably closed my eyes in the midst of the maze and dreamed of the stars and beautiful foliage and idolized ideals and human fetish love that had no reason, or sense, or beginning, or end.

It was not difficult for me to understand the vast and barren Sahara that separates the wonderful love of the sentiments from the thing called by the same name that is carried into the usual conjugal relation. But to make one, or the other, or both of them, over so as to have a perfect blend had never occurred to me as being in the realm of possibilities. Yet, the hard-headed, unsentimental, misanthropic Young, more than intimated that his poetic lawyer friend had accomplished this feat.

If he really had and I could get the story, then no gem of India setting could possibly equal this in either literary or practical value.

So I resolved to go after the story with

all the diplomacy and skill which I possessed.

* * * * * *

It took us nine days to sail from Suez to Bombay. If it had been eight I would have failed in my quest. It was through no lack of zeal on my part, either, for I cultivated Burnett at every opportunity I had to be with him. But not once could I lead him into any reference to himself or his life. He had an unusual store of information on a vast variety of practical and sentimental subjects and he would regale me with tales of legal trials, or adventures in the Rocky Mountains, or discussions of famous poets, novelists, historians, opera singers, actors,—everything and everybody but himself.

We were engaged in some of this sort of conversation the last evening of our voyage as we took our ante-dinner constitutional around the deck. Suddenly the sinking sun drove into the banks of clouds that had been gathering near the horizon and immediately there burst upon us the most gorgeous sunset I had ever seen. Where the sun had entered the clouds, was formed the opening of a huge cavern which seemed to extend miles backward, with sides and roof and floor reflecting transparent mosaics far more vivid and much more richly colored than any ever created

by the hand of man. Deeper, richer, more intense, grew the coloring every minute and for miles around the horizon floated streamers of dainty blue and delicate violet tints.

Burnett scarcely moved a muscle of his face and certainly never shifted his gaze until fifteen minutes later it all went out with the effect of a clap of thunder. Then it was he became aware again of my presence.

"My God!" he exclaimed, "isn't the solitude and loneliness of the sea appalling after such a magnificent display? I lived many things over again while gazing into that wondrous cavern. It seemed to make them clear to me and to reconvince me that my uncle's theory is right, that the reason the good, the beautiful and the true are not always reflected in every phase of daily life is really through the degradation of the most sublime thing about us—our intellect, for after all, the dictum of Jacobi contains a mighty truth: 'Nature conceals God; man reveals God.'"

I could scarcely believe my ears. Here were snatches of my story. I asked delicate, deft questions until he poured out his soul to me; a wonderful soul it was, too, clear and shimmering as the Italian Lakes, wholly uncontaminated from the dross of experiences which he must have had,

but in no wise lacking in a keen sense of humor concerning the extravagant inconsistencies of life.

We did not go to the large salon for dinner,—but, instead, we went aft on the main deck and had such things as could be obtained from the grill served to us on a wicker table, out-doors.

For two hours I led him on with the revelations of his innermost self and when he told me that he had written his experiences and conclusions concerning love for his uncle, I started my campaign to get a copy.

He protested quite strongly against letting any eyes other than his uncle's see his letters, although he said his uncle had lately urged him to consent to their publication, and he had edited them so as to comply with this request, if he thought favorably of the suggestion after his arrival at Bombay. I had noticed that, notwithstanding the fact that he had been there before, he gave expression to mingled feelings of nervousness, apprehension and joy whenever he referred to Bombay and his arrival there, and I surmised in a misty way that his fate had been or might be influenced by some person or something in that city, and, acting on this subconscious inspiration, I suggested that he permit me to renew my request the next day after our landing. To this he almost joyfully assented,

and, when I met him at the Taj Mahal Hotel at the appointed time, his countenance and manner radiated happiness as he handed me a copy of the letters. The conditions were that I might take it with me to be returned to him by mail when I reached Manila two months later, unless I found there his written consent to keep it, which consent was dependent upon his uncle's approval.

I readily agreed to these terms. I found his letter giving permission to me to keep my copy, awaiting me at Manila, along with the addenda, as it appears at the end of this tale.

The war was on us when I returned to America and I have awaited the time when I believed the public generally craved something that struck near the roots of the causes which pervert the normal channels of life and which are the real causes for all war.

I have changed neither the substance nor the construction of any of his letters and have eliminated only the portions which related to other subjects than the ones which his uncle requested him to cover, as well as the opening and closing phrases. It will be seen that the letters cover a period of about seven years and I have arranged them in the proper sequence to make a complete and connected narrative.

I am convinced that his story is told so graphically and naturally that my own art could not make it either more entertaining or of better literary quality.

While these letters contain a tender love story, they are also quite illuminating as to the various kinds of love in the world and their influence and dependence upon the individual heredity of pure or tainted blood and early environment, and the power of these latter things upon every social relation of life.

It is quite evident from his uncle's request for an account of his life up to the time he meets (if he ever does) "the one woman without whom life seems impossible," that this learned relative set much scientific value on the actual experiences which a clean-blooded young man might have in getting into the realms of genuine love, particularly when his intellect had been steeped in the suggestions as to what constitutes "genuine love."

But there is no effort in Burnett's letters to vindicate or disprove any theory of any person. He does not undertake to make of himself either a Don Juan or a Parsifal, but just a human man living a human life and ever endeavoring to have conduct accord with purpose.

CHAPTER II

BURNETT'S STORY

A WISE UNCLE

Bombay, October 27, 1913.

MY DEAR AUTHOR FRIEND:—The attached preface and copy of my uncle's letter to me seem necessary to make the subsequent recitals clear:

My earliest recollection of life is shrouded in sadness, for my father died when I was but three years of age. To me, even to-day, flowers bear sombreness and tears in their folds and church hymns are irremediably associated with death.

The management of the small estate which my father left was entrusted to my mother's brother, James Eskridge, who was a noted medical doctor in Philadelphia, and who had specialized in the field of mental and nervous diseases. I have never known the time when my uncle's presence was not a source of joy to me, nor a moment when his great, brilliant, hypnotic, brown eyes did not read my every thought and impulse. He was, in-

deed, a famous hypnotist and his subjects were often difficult as well as refractory, but I never heard of his failing in any of his hypnotic efforts.

From the beginning of his supervision of our affairs, he had a theory and a program for my education and training and he took an intimate and live personal interest in my work.

Regularly, once a month, he spent a week end at our home, which was a few hours' journey from Philadelphia, and he directed my mind in channels that I imagine are radically different from those in which the thoughts of most boys are trained to travel.

He also gave explicit directions of conduct toward me to my mother and sister, the only other child in our family, who was two years older than myself.

It was not until I left this wonderful life, where real culture and gentleness, combined with practical sense, reigned supreme, that I appreciated its effect upon my every thought and action.

The eating of flesh, fish and fowl was tabooed in our household, and fruit, vegetables and cereals constituted our chief diet.

"Why should the pure blood of these children be contaminated with all the toxic fibre and other forms of poisons that, of necessity, infest the car-

cass of every dead animal?" My uncle would ask in answer to any queries concerning the reasons for this regimen.

I noticed in my school contests for literary and class honors that I had far greater success when I ate temperately than I did when I indulged in the luxuries of the table.

My mother was a writer of short stories which met with ready publication in metropolitan magazines and my sister was devoted to instrumental music, particularly the harp and violin.

It is not strange that in this atmosphere and in the training which all of us received from my uncle by which our relations to each other and to every human being with whom we came in contact were made to conform in letter and spirit to the tenderest, most beautiful and most sacred thoughts in the world, my own outlook on life should have begun with faith in the prevalence of high ideals and noble standards in the association of all classes of people.

On the morning following my graduation from High School I received this letter from my uncle:

MY DEAR NEPHEW:—I am writing this on your graduation day from the High School of

your native city. You have every reason to be proud of your class standing and general deportment during your school attendance.

What I have been chiefly interested in, however, was your environment during that period. The direction which I have attempted to give your life and ambition would have been of little value had it not been for the constant devotion and influence of the very superior woman who happens to be your mother.

Comprehending as she does the marvelous beauties of the world and the exalted possibilities of human life, as well as the perpetual temptation to drop into the grooves of inferiority and comparative degradation, where the great mass of humanity is struggling, it would have been odd if your chosen associates had not been of the type that think upward rather than otherwise.

As I have often told you, I intend that your school education shall end with your present graduation. It is, of course, in your power to elect otherwise, but all that schools of any kind can do is to equip the young with an adequate amount of mental and moral discipline for the mastery of any practical or other problem with which they may have to deal.

Such discipline I am confident you possess, and

I desire to keep it in prime condition through contact with real life rather than chance its being blunted or benumbed through a surfeit of theoretical existence. For that reason, I have secured the promise of a school for you in Western Illinois, if you can qualify as a teacher there, so that the experiences may sharpen your powers of observation and give you a wider knowledge of human nature in various stages of development. This will the better equip you for your studies to enter your chosen profession of the law. The only worth-while aim of human life or endeavor is the development of character. "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" is, in its full significance, the most potent passage in the Holy Bible, as well as being the constant interrogation, in one form or another, that must ring daily in the ears of every active human being.

I have very often gone over with you the intimate relations of physiology and psychology; of clean blood and a clear brain; of physical and mental and spiritual exaltation; of the good, the beautiful and the true in nature and in art; of the utter impossibility of the best spiritual progress without the best physical progress, however much the latter may be subordinated in control to the former; of the hopelessness of attaining *real* hap-

piness without feeling for and receiving from some true woman, a *pure, tender* and *complete love.*

This last is so essentially the foundation of any sort of genuine bliss or advancement in the lives of individuals or nations that I must reiterate in writing some of the topics I have many times covered in conversation.

To you, who have been thoroughly informed on all phases of sex life, what I am about to say can be neither recondite nor abstruse. It is a criminal reflection upon our ethical standards that the substance of this letter should not be readily understood by every young person. You have mastered several branches of higher mathematics, one of the dead languages, and two of the living ones, and yet, such is the hypocrisy of our morals, that the great mass of people would consider it strange that you could possibly have any fundamental information about your own physical and mental being and the vital elements that constitute *you* and every other human being.

However, I think the world so old and so effete and so filled with ennui in a hundred directions, is still mystified by, and perhaps somewhat interested in, the question:—

"What is love?"

Sometimes, in my professional experiences, I

turn away from all hope that any large portion of humanity either understands or cares to comprehend what love is; yet if war and pestilence and plague and poverty are to be obliterated it can only be through the proper conception of genuine love and its adoption in all classes of society. The exquisite dream of the poets and the musicians is not the debased thing which so often bears the same name in real life.

Most of the sex relations among the creatures which populate the earth and which make no pretensions to mind, or soul, or divinity, are on a more cleanly, healthful, rational and elevated basis than that attending the same relations among millions of human beings.

Can it be possible that our divine endowments of memory and thought and power of expression have wrought our degradation through the tremendous influence of suggestion? Is mankind really depraved, and if so whence came all the beautiful songs and poems, and inspirations of religion that have sprung from the human soul? Are they the out-croppings of the innate nature of man or are they the vivid visions of a few oversouls that arouse a response in the human breast from the tender beauty or tremendous sublimity of their expression?

If depravity rules the heart, could there be any such response?

I have pondered over these questions many, many times. From the mists of conflicting theories of philosophy and religion and from my own observation, I am inclined to the belief that much of the real beauty and most of the defects in human nature are created through the power of suggestion. Thus human emotions respond uniformly to religious and other sentiments that have been generally accepted and taught to the young as worthy and elevating.

Thus poetic love never ceases to be revered and applauded, but it is seldom practised.

Why?

Away back near the dawn of life, almost every suggestion to boys and girls both, in relation to sex matters, tends toward the debasement of that relation.

From the time she can understand such things, it is deftly suggested to the girl that little Johnny somebody is her beau and that they probably will marry when they grow up.

As the child becomes older such suggestions take more concrete form, until, when she crosses the borderland of young womanhood, she cannot help being convinced that the great end of existence is

to make a good match, which generally means to marry a man of independent wealth, or high social position, or temporarily in the limelight of prestige, or having some other qualification quite apart and distinct from the possession of either pure blood or a pure mind, or a favorable early environment, or the possession of high ideals, or a well-formed and worthy character. And the boy, as I have warned you so often, gets far worse notions from the idle and oft-times vile suggestions of other boys and men.

So it is that the physical and moral powers which should fit men and women for the reigning throne of happiness over every other thing that exists are blunted and stunted to such an extent that they are incapable even of letting nature instinctively decide upon a suitable mate. I have told you of the ramifications of the tragedies of these unions; of our modern form of leprosy that crowds asylums, over-crowds jails, fans the flame of the "great white plague," and so woefully helps to fill a joyous world with palsy, paralysis, pestilence and pain.

Yet, the cap sheaf of all human felicity is the marriage relation, when properly effected. The corner stone upon which all human progress must eventually be built is genuine love.

To reconcile the poetic phantasy of love with its scientific selection is not a very difficult undertaking, if only children of both sexes could have the right sort of poetic and scientific suggestion on the subject.

It is important for you to bear in mind that in these sex matters salvation is absolutely individual. The cells composing your organism are not exactly duplicated in the organism of any other human being. Generations of untainted blood among your forebears endowed you with vital cells of a vastly different quality from those of millions of other young people whose progenitors were less fortunate. The original sex characteristics of every atom in your physical being are probably unlike those of any one else. It is certain that your association from childhood with your brilliant and understanding mother and with your very feminine sister have given you a wholly different development along sex lines, as well as along every other line, than could be possible for any young man to attain without such comradeship. You are temperamental by nature and your constant companionship with these two women has undoubtedly made you susceptible to the general influence of beautiful women. In this lies your danger when you go out into the world

by yourself, and, for this reason, I have taken infinite pains to teach you how to discriminate in the selection of feminine associates, so that you may obtain the greatest possible good and happiness from such associations. You will have your head as well as your heart turned by many of them, and this I would not have you wholly avoid, but be sure your feet are on solid earth before you locate your head or your heart among the stars.

Practically, your sex counterpart, in physical, mental and spiritual endowment, exists in this world in many places, and probably, many in one place, and you must take the pains to find her. The more absolutely her sex characteristics complement your own, the more certainly will your companionship and love be complete and lasting.

As I have repeatedly pointed out to you, every aspiration you possess will be greatly accelerated by resolutely acting according to your teachings upon this subject, and every worthy ambition will either be dwarfed or destroyed by ignoring these precepts. Whatever the proportion of psychology and physiology there may be to effect the result, regardless of the breadth or the depth of the hidden law of verities that controls these things, the fact remains that your heart, your brain and your soul will be unerring in choosing your proper mate if you have led a chaste life.

That you will do this I do not doubt, but now that you are going away from all of us who have made your atmosphere what it has been, I want to ask you to write me as freely as you have talked with me. Sometimes you may feel that your life is uneventful and that there is little to tell. But the real life goes on, no matter how humdrum the routine of one's daily labor, and it is this inner life of the spirit that interests me. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he," and it is thus that I would continue to know you.

Tell me what you think and I shall understand what you do.

Moreover, if this seems something of a task, let me assure you that you will find yourself repaid many times over, since you will learn to express yourself fearlessly and frankly, and knowing yourself you will have gained the two rarest things in the world, the seeing eye and the understanding heart.

I know you will live up to the fine standards which you adopted for yourself in school and when you really meet the one woman without whom life seems impossible, you may close your letters to me on that subject.

Don't fail to take into consideration the public and private ideals and action on all questions concerning the affairs of the community where you

may be residing, for those things have a tremendous influence upon the local interpretation of the vital question as to

What is Love?

Always remember that suggestion can elevate as well as degrade, and however much you may be absorbed in practical work or study, let not a day go by that you do not get new inspiration from the glories of the sky, or the earth, or the sea, as well as from the written words that carry the soul into the realms of ecstacy.

I shall hope to receive your final letter before any of your experiences shall have caused you to become misanthropic on the subject—but I do not want you to come to any conclusion until your spirit is so overwhelmed that further delay is unthinkable.

In the life you have led the spirit will speak truly and convincingly.

With my love and admiration,

Your uncle,

JAMES ESKRIDGE.

* * * * * *

The subsequent pages contain only my letters to my uncle.

Sincerely yours,

GEORGE BURNETT.

CHAPTER III

"I AM DEEPLY IN LOVE"

I HAVE endeavored to observe your adjuration to discriminate, and I well remember when you quite impressively said to me: "Learn early how to attach proper and discriminating values to individuals and to the affairs of life. Don't make the grievous mistake of trying to classify people along sex or other lines until you have some considerable knowledge of the physical, mental and moral traits of each person. That is the great flaw in our present theory of education, from the kindergarten to the University. You can never make a great lawyer until you master the science of discrimination and the art of applying your judgment thus formed to the single person."

Thus I have waited to tell you of this community and my own life here until I understood something of their significance myself.

My letters may now weary you with their frequency.

I am convinced that you did not intend that I should be a dragon killer of either the Siegfried variety, by which my own skin would be turned to such horny texture as to be impervious to all blows, or of the Dieudonne de Gorzon kind, by which I should learn meekness and self-control through the lessons of rebuked courage that might follow independent initiative.

Neither do I conceive it to be any part of my mission in life to specialize as a paladin of women generally, or as individuals. If any such exalted ambitions were marked out for me, Uncle dear, I fear your idol has had no more valuable ingredients in its composition than plain, ordinary mud, for, to tell you the truth, I am deeply, madly in love.

I am sure you will not, cannot, approve it, however well I may state my case and along that line I shall certainly give you all the marshaled array of philosophy and sentiment that many wakeful nights have presented to me.

The tragedy of it is that it is not the climactic love which you say is the only genuine love; neither is it one which may be crowned with the sacred marriage vow.

I don't understand it. Therefore I cannot analyze it. I only know it seems the most beautiful devotion I have ever known and one that should be universally applauded.

I shall give you all the settings and then you can judge for yourself.

I forget that you know nothing of my situation here, or of my school, or of the country, or of the people.

Perhaps I should enlighten you on these subjects before delving into the maze of sentiment.

As you know, I make my home with your friend and schoolmate, Josiah Brooker. The family consists of himself and wife, and a daughter named Jessica, who is about my own age.

Their home is one mile from Orlando, which is the only nearby village or town and it is twelve miles from the Mississippi River and the railroad and the small Iowa city, which is the metropolis of this section of the universe.

The farm people, as a rule, occupy spacious frame houses, comfortably furnished. Most of them, or their ancestors, settled in this fruitful country before the railways were built and when river trading was universally profitable.

They are free from debt, as a rule, and many of them have seen much of both America and

Europe. Money accumulation is pretty evenly distributed and only two people stand out as being the "rich people" of the neighborhood.

Josiah Brooker is one of these rich people and Mrs. James Randolph Dale is the other one.

The fortune of each of these persons is about Three Hundred Thousand Dollars.

The farm people have many interesting literary, dancing, musical and card clubs and societies within a radius of ten miles from our residence and Miss Brooker and I often attend their sessions.

The most fascinating coterie, however, to me is that one in the village which gathers around the huge base-burner stove in the corner grocery store every Saturday night. This store is also the home of the Post-office, and is kept by the "fattest man in Illinois." He is a jovial, ruddy-complexioned man in middle life, whose normal weight is about three hundred and fifty pounds, but my experience with him convinces me that most of it is heart, for he is daily giving such a vast store of this portion of his anatomy to all who need help, that it is necessary to keep it duly replenished, even if other parts of his physical being have to overhang and unduly obtrude to furnish storage material therefor.

"Discriminate! Discriminate! Discriminate!" I repeat these words to myself very often during the evenings I spend by the stove in the corner grocery.

There is an atmosphere of seriousness in this community which seems to be lacking in similar communities in the East and the average person here is remarkably well informed, not only in ordinary affairs but on many more or less abstruse subjects. I shall undertake to give you the reasons for this in subsequent letters.

Besides the proprietor, there generally is gathered the local physician, the local preacher, the local barber and the local poet, and divers temporary visitors who back into the circle from time to time with hands extended rearward and warmward while awaiting the fulfillment of some purchase by the agile son or vivacious daughter of the fat man, who act as clerks.

A curious coincident exists in the formation of the feet of the medical and the divinity doctors. Each has club feet which turn inward and one foot has to pass over the other in walking.

All people who are deformed or crippled are supposed to have idiosyncrasies characteristic of the particular defect and both of these men are unceasing objects of psychological interest to me.

Aside from the feet they are well formed, with apparently good health and a fair amount of intellectual vigor. Each has hair bordering on dark red, which each parts near the middle, and each wears a mustache of like hue with the hair and quite thick in its meshes.

I have never met but one man with deformed feet who really caught the humor of life, and his feet were twisted in a cyclone when he was a boy. You know him, Mr. H——. It seems to him such a joke on his vanity that he never fails to see the point as it strikes off the inconsequential frailties of other people.

However irregular the feet of my new found friends may be, their minds are quite orthodox enough to compensate for their pedal defects.

The sermons of the preacher are honeycombed with irascible dogmatism and the prescriptions of the other doctor, they say, are as old as materia medica itself.

The barber is a frail little man, with a large head, and a persistent cough that savors somewhat of tubercular trouble.

He has a philosophical mind and keen observation and wit. He is widely read and is equipped always with a fresh supply of good stories. He was a school teacher in this section of Illinois until

his health became too delicate for the close confinement attendant upon that occupation.

The poet has rather a feminine tremor to his speaking tones and the texture of his skin as well as the woof of his conversation partakes more largely of the gentler than of the sterner sex. But he has as heavy a mustache as either doctor possesses. That is the one sign-board of maleness, set against an otherwise predominating background of physical and mental femininity. He obtained his sobriquet from the more or less meritorious original verses which he carries in his small weekly newspaper.

While not a part of this charmed circle, another type of customer frequently comes into the store and tarries a moment to greet those around the stove.

She is the Magdalene of the little settlement and the universal treatment accorded her is patterned after the Great Example set at the foot of the Mount of Olives twenty centuries ago. She has marks of considerable youthful beauty and from the folds of the spacious hood which she wears peeps a gentle face, with sorrowful eyes and lines of deep grief.

It took me quite a while to solve the mystery of this knightly treatment of the erring one in a

community so markedly strict and precise as this one is in every other respect.

I finally discovered that there is a real Mentor and guide quite apart from and above any of these distinguished men and that her wand of authority is as effective as it is gracious and sweet and considerate and wholesome.

Of her and the Magdalene also I shall have more to tell.

I shall continue this recital until you have my full story.

CHAPTER IV

AN INTERESTING COTERIE

THE farm people seldom join the village circle around the stove.

The church organization to which most of these people belong, in village as well as in country, is one of those off-shoots of presbyterianism which desires a more strict compliance with the rigid discipline and conventional deportment commended by the founder of the parent church than that same parent church was enforcing in the newer world of its operations.

The Brookers worship at this church and I attend it with due regularity.

Sunday is a most solemn day in this community, both in and out of church, as most of the desirable recreations to lighten the hours are tabooed by the church ritual, or catechism, or rules of conduct, or through lay customs, and in the last respect the opinion of the church is the social ac-

colade and standard for unbelievers as well as for devotees.

The Barber says: "If Sunday solemnity is the accredited certificate for St. Peter this community will get into the Golden Streets en masse,—but," —he adds, "they will probably soon be thrown out as insurgents, for of course they will refuse there as they do here to play the harp or other musical instrument on Sunday."

No embryo surgeon ever possessed a finer assortment of human specimens for anatomical carving than I have here thrust upon me for psychological study. Of necessity all my analyses are influenced by my years of training under you, but I am trying to detail my impressions as accurately as possible.

In speaking of my life here, Andrew Young, whom I shall tell you about later, always delights to say: "No wonder you have no girl seriously trying to appropriate you. You are pretty punk bait to anything feminine, with *your* meagre income and frugal habits. Then, of course, your professional prospects do not dazzle with their brilliancy."

The Poet took a different view of this the other evening. The Fat Man was rather chaffing me

concerning my attentions to young Jessica Brooker, in this vein:

"Go right along and marry her if you can. The few thousand she can bring you will be more useful to you now than at any other time in your career and you can easily repay her in a few years with interest for this financial help."

The Fat Man is generous enough to believe in me.

What follows in this conversation will greatly interest you.

"Why should any person talk about repaying in connection with any marriage, for, of course, what I am saying is wholly impersonal,"—broke in the Poet.

"No woman ever marries a man unless she has a maternal love for him, and that is beyond any recompense or repayment. Women love to bestow upon men their all in worldly goods as well as in affection, if the sentiment is genuine. Look at my dear wife. If it was not for the income from her estate and her management of all our affairs, what would become of me? Still there are few more devoted married couples than we are."

"The Poet is right," said the Barber. "If I could find a duplicate of *his* wife I would try to

get her to take me over as a devoted, non-working slave. It must be delightful," he laughingly said, "to have none of the responsibilities of married life and all the joys and finances of feminine devotion." Then with a sigh he added: "But I greatly fear my weakness in wanting to rule the roost might seriously conflict with the splendid masculine qualities which so eminently fit some women to do all these things for a man, while *he* revels in the more or less feminine realms of emotional life.

"Seriously," he said, straightening himself in his chair and assuming a dignity which often characterizes his conversation, "I mean this as no reflection on either sex, for, fortunately for the world, the absolute masculine and the absolute feminine are only types or standards that are not to be found in our present civilization. We are all in some degree 'intermediate,' and it is well it is so.

"If your wife"—speaking to the Poet—"was absolutely and scientifically feminine, she would not have the power of reason or memory, or logic, or sense of justice successfully to discharge the manifold duties attaching to the management of your household and her estate.

"And, if you," still addressing the Poet—"had not the exquisite emotions and temperamental variations to your life which are characteristically feminine, your verses would lose the tender notes which make them so attractive."

The Poet's expression indicated that he did not exactly know whether he was being complimented or insulted, but when he attempted to speak, the Barber raised his hand for silence.

"Just a moment," he said. "We have accidentally drifted into channels that carry mighty swift currents and terribly muddy water and we shall soon be lost in the flood unless we place some headgates of definitions and clarifying alum of limitations upon a lot of general terms as they are commonly used."

Again turning to the Poet: "The reason you are congenially mated is because the masculine in your noble wife exactly complements the feminine in your own good self, and thus the perfect sexual union is effected."

"The pedagogue never will down with our friend the Barber; he should have stuck to the School House. One would think we were a class in the study of sex and character," said the Preacher.

"I know now the 'Gobble-uns' 'll git me if I don't watch out,' " and the Fat Man shook his sides with laughter in which we all joined.

"All right, gentlemen," said the Barber, "have your fun at my expense, but let me tell you that the world would have more laughter and joy in it if the schools had more pedagogues who correctly taught these doctrines. I have had my own unhappy experiences in life and I have my own reasons for never marrying, but long ago I determined to understand as well as I could this whole sex problem and little has been written on the subject scientifically that I have not studied. Of course it is yet in crude and floating form in my limited brain. I should think you"—turning to the Medical Doctor—"would understand this better than any of us."

"These theories are too fine spun for me," replied the M. D. "It is all I can do to keep up with a small part of the advances that are continually being made in surgery and medicine without exploiting these newer fields of sex relations."

"They are as old as time," replied the Barber. "Most of the animals never go wrong for they act naturally. But we human beings go far afield continually, because of our perverted mental vision.

"In any event this young man," nodding at me, "will never start wrong in the matrimonial field, if he ever starts at all, for I have talked with him often and long."

He had, indeed, done so and while his theories were often nebulous, yet they were scientifically accurate, as you have explained them to me, and I found that the Barber possessed a large collection of books on this and kindred subjects. This was all interesting to me for you had told me that it was not difficult for the average person to understand these things if his attention was directed to them and that the plain people were giving them more thought than was generally imagined.

The Preacher took up the cudgel again: "'Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing,' says the Proverbs. Every person should marry according to our doctrine."

"I am not sure that you are quite orthodox in your last statement," said the Barber. "I read an essay on marriage the other day by one of England's most brilliant writers and what he says on the church phase of the subject is something like this. Wait a moment, I think I tore it out of the publication and have it in my pocket.

"Yes, here it is," he said, as he produced a half-dozen printed pages folded one in the other.

Opening the pages he read: " 'The religious revolt against marriage is a very old one. Christianity began with a fierce attack on marriage; and to this day the celibacy of the Roman Catholic Priesthood is a standing protest against its compatibility with the higher life. St. Paul's reluctant sanction of marriage; his personal protest that he countenanced it of necessity and against his own conviction; his contemptuous 'better to marry than to burn,' is only out of date in respect of his belief that the end of the world was at hand and that there was, therefore, no longer any population question. We have more and more Pauline celibates whose objection to marriage is the intolerable indignity of being supposed to desire or live the married life as ordinarily conceived.' "

"Twentieth Century heresy!" exclaimed the Preacher. "In all parts of the scripture marriage is advocated and wives are protected."

"Yes," said the Barber slowly and with a twinkle in his eye. "My essayist says—'What marriage is really founded on is the accepted conjugal rank and property classification of wives in the tenth commandment: 'Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, nor thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.' "

Even the Preacher could not resist this shot and he joined in the general laughter.

"You folks always amuse me when you discuss matrimonial subjects," essayed the Fat Man. "As far as I am concerned I have been too busy with matrimonial facts to bother about any of its theories. My wife and I married when we were quite young, without stopping to theorize about it, and we have gotten along as well as most of our neighbors have for the past twenty-five years. Many spats and several children—yes—but they are part of the game. I have had three square meals a day and a good bed to sleep in and a clean house to live in all that time. What more can be expected of marriage?"

The little crowd dispersed for the night without the question being answered.

CHAPTER V

A SUPERIOR WOMAN

I AM in love, deeply in love, and now you shall have that part of my story.

My young friend, Jessica Brooker, is a wonderfully sweet and winsome girl. Tall, slender, graceful as a fawn with almost the fawn's eyes—great, brown, soft and dreamy eyes, which set off a complexion that needs neither powder nor rouge to enhance its effect.

She loves life and revels is every mood of it,—from the dancing, vivacious sprite to the far-away gazer at sombreness.

I have often wondered what my real sentiment might be toward this girl if her father did not possess wealth.

In every thoughtful and gracious way she takes me unreservedly into her circle of friends and thus gives me a social life which not only lightens my hours, but which will have a lasting effect upon

my own actions concerning the entertainment of the stranger within the gate.

But it is not with Jessica Brooker that I am in love.

I might be if she were of a family somewhat poorer in worldly goods. I mean I might not have set the brakes and the affections then might have found a true affinity, which also means that my mind was tinctured and influenced by the suggestion of what people might think concerning my motives in a matter of this sort,—which is probably as destructive or as injurious as a "suggestive influence" as were those which you so strenuously denounced in your letter to me.

Other plans have been made for Jessica Brooker's future, and, as a guest of the family, I am bound to observe these plans.

Anyhow, that is the logic evolved from those tight-set brakes.

If she were of a family not prominent for their material possessions, I wonder how much figure the duty as a family guest would cut, or how long the brakes would remain locked?"

In any event, neither my own soul nor hers is overwhelmed with the great passion, and, perhaps, a fine, passive friendship would be the utmost relation that could be developed on either side. She

is a dutiful daughter and the dictates of the environment of her life are to follow the directions laid down by her parents, even in affairs of the heart.

The love which is aroused by another woman, at this time, *is overwhelming.* The more so because it is not *the grand passion,* demanding possession. It is the devotion so exquisitely penned by Poe to Mrs. Stanard for making much of him as a mere lad when he was buffeting the world alone.

Helen, thy beauty is to me
  Like those Nicean barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
  The weary, way-worn wanderer bore
To his own native shore.

For several weeks after I arrived in Illinois I was utterly forlorn without my mother and sister. Daily letters were but a cold and impassive makeshift for the warm embraces of my kindred women, and many times I fear I was caught in the dire depths of nostalgia.

You have truly written that my association with my mother and sister would make me susceptible to the influence of other beautiful women, and

when I met that wonderful personality known as Celene Virginia Dale, and she made of me and complimented me on my ambition, my soul was aflame with adoration.

In one of the sweetest of all love stories, Max Müller tells of the boy who was taken to the castle by his father and just as he was being directed how to greet the Prince and Princess the folding doors opened and a tall figure with brilliantly piercing eyes stretched out her hands to him. She had a beautiful expression and "A heavenly smile played about her cheeks."

The boy could stand no more. Rank was no longer a barrier to him.

He ran to the beautiful lady, threw his arms around her neck and kissed her as he would his own mother. The majestic lady willingly submitted, stroked his hair and smiled, but his father took him home and rebuked him for his rudeness. His mother told him he should not have done this, "for they are strangers," she said.

"And what then are strangers? May I not love all people who look upon me with affectionate and friendly eyes?"

"You can love them, my son," replied his mother, "but you should not show it."

When Jessica Brooker took me to call on Mrs.

Dale, and a symphony in white, with radiant dark blue eyes, glowing cheeks and overpowering charm greeted me as the one person in the world whom she was most delighted to meet, I fear I came quite close to repeating the affectionate responses of the boy.

Yes—it was "overpowering charm."

I have known other women, each of whom had more perfect features, more beautiful hair, more exquisite complexion, more classic form, but never have I known any woman who so instantly and permanently holds the admiration of men, women and children as does this woman.

It is folly, dear uncle, for me to attempt to analyze a wonderful sunset, the appearance of a rainbow, the effect of a particular melody and still this seems easy compared with an effort to define the constituent elements of this superior woman.

A discussion at her home shortly after this introduction will shed more light upon the source of her power and the nature of her character than I could possibly detail.

It happened in this wise: There are twenty-six pupils in my "district school," ranging in classes from "A. B. C." to Algebra,—Latin and Philosophy.

Two boys and two girls are slightly older than I am and they often put me to pretty difficult tests in answering their questions.

There is an atmosphere of earnestness and ideals and purpose in this community that I have never found anywhere else, and the incidents I am about to relate will account for this also.

At the session of the philosophy class on this particular day one of the young men said: "Teacher, some time I wish you would give us your own idea of what is and what is not worth while in life and what theory of philosophy will best lead to the desired result."

This I promised to do at an early date.

That evening I dined at the Dale house and was introduced to Andrew Young,—who is about thirty years of age and already has achieved much fame as a civil engineer.

CHAPTER VI

THE SPIRIT OF LINCOLN IN ILLINOIS

YOUNG had met the Dales in Washington, where James Randolph Dale is serving his third term as a member of Congress from his district, and as Mr. Dale had acquired some mining property in the Rocky Mountain region, he had engaged Young's services in looking after it, and just at this time Dale has enlisted the advisory services of Young in some work which the Government is doing on the Mississippi River in this vicinity, and in which Dale is much interested as a Congressman.

Besides this arrangement it is easily apparent that Mr. and Mrs. Dale and Young have become excellent friends, and Young arrived that day at their home for a visit, as well as for business purposes.

Young is a man of conflicting fascination to me, as he is to the Dales. I shall have so much to re-

late about him that his personality will develop itself.

Mr. Dale is a man of resolute will, determined purpose, wide knowledge, broad culture, with a reputation for skilled and effective oratory and loyalty to friends. He is a lawyer by profession and a statesman by decree of his wife.

It is obvious that he has none of the hypocritical cant or dodging phrases, or meaningless and side-stepping rhetoric, or hang-dog obeisance, which I am told the constituencies of the larger cities and of many parts of the far West develop in public officials.

He looks his associates straight in the eye, speaks directly, honestly, sincerely and illuminatingly on all serious subjects and with fine sarcasm, wit and satire on those of lesser importance.

I happened to tell my dinner party of the question propounded in school that day and this started one of the liveliest and most instructive conversations I ever listened to and one which shed a world of light not only upon the dominating tone of this community, but also furnished a key for the discovery of the cause of such influences elsewhere.

"You might practice your proposed answer on

us," and Mrs. Dale accompanied the words with a winning smile.

"It would make possible a better answer to the class if you good people would tell me something of the practical workings of the philosophy of Socrates, or Comte, or Spencer, or Kant, or Schopenhauer," I replied.

Mr. Dale opened the discussion: "One of the few brilliant things I recall that the Duke of Wellington said was, 'It is ten times nature,' when somebody quoted in his presence the quiescent and quieting adage and blanket excuse for most of the shortcomings of the world: 'Habit is second nature.'

"Imperceptibly, I suppose, all great teachings of philosophy influence the mass of mankind, but it is a slow process to scale the mental and moral walls that hem in most communities, with their conventions, their hypocrisies, their fads, their localisms, their jealousies, their hatreds, their loves, their prejudices, and their selfishness. And the standard of approval or criticism in each community controls human action more than the teachings of all the religions and philosophies ever brought into the world."

"In your political realm, Dale," said Young, "you should have many live examples, or ossified

cadavers, more probably, of the effect of the philosophy of 'to have and to hold,' 'to the victor belongs the spoils,' 'the battle is not always to the strong nor the race to the swift,' 'take a course in dramatic art and if you fail on the stage, you probably can succeed on the stump,' 'Peace at any Price,' when talking to the Pacifists and 'national honor must be upheld by the bayonet if needs be' when talking to patriots, 'Never mind the methods, get the offices.' "

All of us laughed, but Mrs. Dale also gave Young a serio-comic look, as she said, "You dear old cynic,—cannot you understand that Mr. Dale is a statesman and not a politician?"

"Impossible," quickly replied Young. "It was the brilliant Blaine who said that a statesman is a dead politician. Now you see, fair lady, how impossible you have made it for your husband ever to become a statesman, if he is not even a politician while he is alive."

"Well, I have my own ideal of philosophy, anyhow," said Mrs. Dale.

"It is difficult to find a better fundamental creed of living than that of the Prophet Micah: 'What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?' Or Christ's reply to the lawyer who asked

a similar question to that which we are discussing."

"You don't mean," said Young, "that you are for the Christian ideal of turning the other cheek, or as some of the Christian champions interpret it, that 'the wretched, the poor, the impotent, the lowly alone are the good, and only the sufferers, the needy, the sick, the ugly are the pious, while the proud, the potent are forevermore the godless, the cursed and the damned'?"

Mrs. Dale answered with some spirit: "That was the appeal of some of the early Evangelists to get the lowest of earth into the church of Christ. It has for centuries been the appeal of worldly sovereigns who wished to keep the masses in serfdom or in leash, and unfortunately it is the appeal we hear in this country from demagogic politicians who always want to show the 'pee-pul' that they are their real champions and that they can only successfully champion so long as they have the perpetual vote of this sort of 'pee-pul.' The Christ whose teachings I admire was the militant Christ who, himself, upset the tables of the oppressive money-changers in Jerusalem, who denounced weakness and passive goodness everywhere, who did not hesitate to thunder at the

Pharisees that the blood of all the Prophets from the foundation of the world might be required of that generation, and who said 'Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay!' By peace he meant quiescent individual slothfulness, spiritually and physically. It took nothing from his force or strength when he wove that wonderful parable of the good Samaritan, or became a friend to Mary Magdalene, or forgave his enemies because they knew not what they did. He thus vindicated anew the maxim that the bravest are the tenderest. But, nowhere, did he try to create or defend the bearded effeminacy of an interpretation of his doctrines, as some prominent people are trying now to do."

"Splendid!" exclaimed Young as he clapped his hands. "When they get woman suffrage in Illinois, I am going to take up a residence in this Congressional district expressly to help send you to Congress.*

"You know they have a five-minute rule for all important debates there and you can say more to the point in five minutes than any one, who is a member of that Assembly, aside from your distinguished husband, and, of course, it is obvious

* These occurrences were before the Illinois women obtained even their limited voting franchise.—The Author.

where he got *his* training. But just the same, my lady, the *interpretation* of Christianity that largely permeates the world tends to make people indolent, indifferent, satisfied with the lowliest lot without any effort to change it, opaque intellectually and stratified spiritually." Becoming more earnest, he continued: "What do you suppose has been the effect on mankind for the past two thousand years of having *these* pronounced axioms of right living and approved appeals to ambition taught from the pulpits of many Christian churches,—without any explanation, or qualification, or illumination? 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' 'Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.' 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.' Or this from St. Paul: 'God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen to bring to naught things that are.' "

She was ready with her reply: "I grant you that these topics handled by ignorant or bigoted religious teachers have wrought untold harm in encouraging indolence and in crushing spirited ambition and in arming craven and designing rulers

with their most effective weapons in getting and keeping an ignorant following. I also grant you that much that philosophers who champion the Will to Power doctrine say about the effect of this sort of interpretation of Christianity is true. But so would the effect of prejudiced attempts to construe detached portions of their own creed be harmful, until corrected by properly connecting and explaining them as part of the context. Christ preached individual salvation, individual development, individual responsibility just as strenuously as did these philosophers. 'The Kingdom of God is within you,' He stated and reiterated in many forms. He was no more of a leveler of individuals than were the philosophers you quote, and however much I disagree with them on other subjects, I thoroughly endorse what they say about 'the attempt to degenerate mankind to the universal level of the man of the future, as idealized by some of the socialistic fools and shallow pates,' as they call them, 'to the state of gregarious animals, and to demand of strength that it should not manifest itself as strength, is as absurd as to demand of weakness that it should manifest itself as strength.' I applaud all this and contend that nowhere does the Christian religion champion a different creed.

"Christ, probably, had not as good reporters as the modern philosophers were writers. And then He had to catch and hold the attention of all classes of people of His time and allowance enough is not made for the environment or characteristics of those classes in discussing the doctrines of Chrisitanity."

I was astounded at the depth and accuracy of her information and I devoured every word and tone with wrapt adoration. She talked to all of us, but I was certain she meant it particularly for me.

"Mrs. Dale and I do not always agree on the interpretation of the scriptures," said Mr. Dale. "But we agree perfectly on the necessity of individual evolution if we are to enjoy even a small part of the beauties of this world, let alone the fitting of ourselves for immortality," and the two exchanged very genuine love glances.

Continuing, he said: "Nothing has evolved so much as philosophy itself and through the contradictions and metaphysical mists of the great philosophers, I get considerable personal satisfaction from the red-blood teachings of some of them.

"I have no patience with The Will To Power teachers that have endeavored to make their theories justify tyranny and autocracy in govern-

ment. To me those theories, generally, are the best vindication of a Democracy, for they would make each person a responsible citizen in times of peace and each soldier an intelligent fighting unit in times of war.

"Such phrases as these must thrill every *real man*: 'Thus willeth the tribe of noble souls: They wish not to have anything *for nothing*, least of all life.' 'One shall not wish to enjoy one's self where one doth not give enjoyment.' And what I am about to quote seems especially written for the voters in many of our American States, judging by the puny products of their efforts: 'Everything that elevates the individual above the herd, ye call evil, while the self-adapting, self-equalizing disposition, the mediocrity of desires, attain to moral distinction and honor among you.' "

He hesitated a moment, then said: "The application of all this is apparent. The reason this section of Illinois has the best political atmosphere of any place I know is because the courageous ideals of Lincoln still prevail here and they color not only political action—but every other function of our social relations.

"Says one philosopher: 'There is no harder lot in all human fate, than when the powerful of the earth are not at the same time the first men.

There everything *becometh* false and warped and monstrous. For what is best shall rule, what is best *will* rule, and when the teaching soundeth different, the best is lacking.' "

"Which is only another way of stating Herbert Spencer's theory of the survival of the fittest," interposed Young.

I was so interested that I could no longer be a mere listener.

"That too," I said, "has been unfairly used to glorify the temporary triumph of the weak and the unworthy. What Spencer really meant he explains himself. 'The survival of the fittest under the conditions in which they are placed, does not by any means necessarily signify that the better and the stronger will survive,' which means, if the environment is best met by mean, emasculated and puny beings, then it follows that those persons will be the fittest to survive who are mean, emasculated and puny."

"Fine," exclaimed Mrs. Dale—with a glance of pride at me.

"Quite right," said Mr. Dale. "And thus the action and reaction of environment on character and the reason of a Super-man like Lincoln influences the destiny of a Community or a State or a Nation for generations.

"And thus the Super-woman in *this* community also influences the destiny of all of you"—said Young—partially rising and courtesying to Mrs. Dale.

The color mounted to her cheeks as she attempted to parry the compliment.

This ended the philosophical discussion and I had received many suggestions for my dissertation to my pupils as well as having much of the mystery solved for me as to the controlling influences in my new environment.

How about this for a country dinner discussion?

CHAPTER VII

EVOLUTION IN SEX IDEALS

I HAVE discovered for the first time, a fact made quite clear to people who have lived in rural as well as in urban districts in America, that as a rule the people in small cities and in the country are much better informed in fine literature than are those in the larger cities. The conversation just related, Young says, would be considered too "high browed" for most city Congressmen he has ever heard of and quite beyond the realms of approved conversation in most "select social circles" in the cities with which he is familiar. Yet, this is not at all an exaggerated colloquy of what might and did take place at a dozen homes in this country community of Illinois. The tremendous influence of an over-soul, the immense benefits to the young of this sort of environment, the emphasis which the conversation of this particular evening made anew concerning individual salvation along sex and spiritual lines, were all abund-

antly illustrated in the daily life of these people. I often recall your words: "The only worth-while aim of human life or endeavor is the development of character," and the vital importance which you attached to the environment and teachings of the young in any attempt at character building.

In the past few weeks I have learned much of the story of Young's life as well as of Mrs. Dale's, and there has begun a fine friendship for two men and one woman without which my life would seem most barren.

But I am deeply in love.

I know that I find myself with her during every moment I can so arrange it and that I hang upon her every word and look with unfeigned adoration.

I also know that the world seems very blank when I am away from her.

But all of my feelings I do not truly know. I already know the full depth of maternal and sisterly love—but this is vastly different. Neither does sex desire or impulse form any part or parcel of the constant longing to be with and near her. And yet, I am convinced that sex charm or fascination constitutes a very material portion of the influence with which I am enthralled. But it is the sex charm or fascination that leads the

soul and intellect, along with the physical instincts, on the ascending instead of on the descending line of human endeavor and being.

Her husband instinctively understands it all, for never has he by word, look or act done aught else than approve our every relation.

It would be sacrilege to suggest the possibility of coquetry in a woman of this character.

Many times in social affairs in my home city have I watched with interest and disgust the coarse and leering smile of suggestiveness between some men when other men would show more than passing interest in a married woman friend in a public place. I loathe such men, now that I have this fine friendship in my life.

These very men would probably feel insulted if it were even intimated that sex influence had anything to do with their association with a mother or a sister and yet the same psychology and training which could and did produce non-sex influence in the first instance can and does produce the same result in the second instance among high-class and properly evolved individuals. Is that not your teaching?

The only difference, as I understand it, is that of ethical standard, which with vulgar and undeveloped people is, of course, the generally ac-

cepted belief in sex dominance of all association of men and women when they are not closely related, and which, with truly cultured people, is that they would not retard their own spiritual growth by engaging in the pastime of throwing mud at a star or refuse on a rare and beautiful rose.

I, now, know also that the generally accepted belief is that the super-woman is such by reason of the art and skill with which she uses the power of sex over her men associates.

I am certain that this theory is also a figment of suggestion, born of the literature which undertakes to deify such flagrant vampires as Helen of Troy, Cleopatra, Madame Du Barry, Madame Pompadour, and others of the same type. There is no hidden mystery either in the method or manner of their conquests. They simply wove the threads of sex magnetism into sensual ropes with which they lassoed the operators of the biggest establishments or enterprises of their day, and thus enjoyed a luxury and ease and limelight which they otherwise could not have had.

To the notoriety of their debaucheries do these women owe their place in the Sun.

But Celene Virginia Dale dominates this little community, and also whoever else comes within

the sphere of her influence, through the power of a definite and worthy purpose in life.

She, too, has an abundance of sex and charm and physical beauty, but *she* also has fine mental and moral equipment.

She, too, takes the threads of sex and weaves them into ropes, but *she* lassoes men, women and children and brings them into richer, brighter, better fields of human endeavor.

Once every week, when she is at home, all children for miles around are made her guests in lawn fetes, or house parties, and she encourages each one with its particular ambition and listens with patience and always with a helpful purpose to every childish tale of sorrow and woe.

She visits every family regularly in turn in this same territory and no case of known illness or distress is lacking in her personal attention.

The Dales reside in a large, old-style, Colonial house, with a half-dozen completely equipped guest's rooms, besides ample and spacious family living and sleeping chambers. Their farm consists of two full sections of land, well stocked with prize breeds of cattle, sheep, poultry and swine.

The house is furnished in truly Colonial manner,—most of the articles having been brought from the Virginia home of Mrs. Dale's paternal

grandfather, who was the family pioneer into this then "New Country," and who built the present house, which has only been changed in the method of lighting, heating and supplying water, and in replaced floors.

There are the same four-post mahogany bedsteads, one of which requires the steps to reach its comfortable furnishings, the same long, haircloth-covered sofas, the same quaint "work-tables," the same dignified chairs, the same huge andirons, the same tall and imposing hall clock, and the walls are graced with the same old family portraits in oval gilt frames, except two wonderfully artistic ones in mahogany frames which were painted by Gilbert Stuart, and which are prized family heirlooms,—all of these things are the same that graced the rooms of the old homestead near Winchester, in the Shenandoah Valley.

The balance of Mrs. Dale's story is best told by herself, and this I shall give you.

CHAPTER VIII

WHAT IS WORTH WHILE IN LIFE?

ONE Saturday afternoon, as Mrs. Dale, Young and myself were taking tea in the music room, before a blazing log fire, Young, who was in one of his serious moods, said: "Mrs. Dale, please tell us how you happened to go into the life you have just been speaking about, for it is generally understood around here that you put Mr. Dale into politics."

She had been relating some rather amusing experiences in Washington.

"James would have gone into politics up to his neck if he had never known me. How could he have helped it? You know he is a Randolph, of the old Roanoke breed at that, and you might as well try to keep ducks out of water as to attempt to keep this Randolph blood from asserting itself in American politics," she replied.

"Come now, Mrs. Modesty," said Young.

"James is all right and he would grace any public position, however high. But you know he would to-day be trying lawsuits to farmer juries and carried away with the idea that he was fulfilling Cæsar's standard of greatness, that 'it is better to be first in a poor, miserable Swiss village than to be second in Rome,' if you had not determined to make him first in Rome. Such, at least, is the legend of the neighborhood."

"Legends are chiefly interesting because of the illusions they create. Now why spoil this one with dry facts?"

"As though any fact could be dry or uninteresting after association with you," replied Young.

"On one condition only will I yield, and that is that you must answer my personal questions when I finish, Mr. Young."

He blushed and looked embarrassed, but he had invited the situation and therefore assented.

She told her story briefly, simply, sincerely:

"I graduated from Vassar when I was twenty-two and that same fall just as my father, my mother, my maiden aunt and myself (for I was an only child) were planning to leave London for home after a motor trip of three months in Europe, my father and mother were both drowned in the River Thames, while they were boating with

some friends, when a large floating but submerged tree caught the boat in its branches and overturned it, drowning all of its occupants.

"I shall not dwell upon any phase of this dreadful tragedy" (as tears gathered in her eyes).

"My aunt brought me to this house and remained with me until my marriage, when she rejoined her own family in Virginia.

"I was sole heir to all this property. Fortunately my father early discovered that I could understand business affairs so I knew pretty well how everything was and could be managed.

"I found I had quite an adequate income for practical as well as for artistic purposes and even enough for the desirable luxuries of life.

"The question propounded to you by your pupils the other day" (speaking to me), "greatly interested me, for that is the question I had to answer to myself as soon as I began active life! 'What is worth while?'

"In school I had a New York girl for a roommate, who came of an old, distinguished and wealthy family, and who saw very deeply and intuitively into the real philosophy of life, and who was not content to think the same thoughts our fathers had thought and do the same things our fathers had done without some further reason

therefore than that carried by a statement of the fact.

"My schoolmate had abounding vitality of body, mind and spirit, and, to her, life was activity, not passivism, energy not slothfulness, evolution not stagnation or retrogression. She preached her doctrine to the other girls on the campus, in their rooms, and when denied the use of public places, in a nearby graveyard. She was the sweetest of the sweet in every fibre of her being, but the mediocrity and suffering produced by the artificial restraints and hypocritical ideals and weak and silly customs of all grades of the social world grieved her and aroused all the ardor and ambition of her soul to find the better paths towards the heights. It was essential to have some cardinal principles and she was rather fond of Herbert Spencer's definition of good and bad, which is something like this: 'The conduct to which we apply the name good, is the relatively more evolved conduct, and bad is the name we apply to conduct which is relatively less evolved.' This was complete, she thought, when supplemented by those other life-giving theories that good is all that increases the feeling of strength, and bad is all that proceeds from weakness, and happiness is the conviction that power constantly

increases, to the end that superior persons spiritually, intellectually and physically, may be made from us ordinary mortals.

"She felt—as every thoughtful person must feel—that this needs the strong hand of government, not to regulate individual evolution, as so many experimenters are attempting to do, but to protect it from evil interference while it works out its own salvation in the soul of each person, however lowly or exalted his apparent station in life may be.

"After her graduation she battled for these ideals to the day of her death—one year ago, and that death was really a martyrdom to her convictions. You both know to whom I refer, for every American who has an ounce of red blood knows her and her work."

We nodded assent and she continued:

"When I was left alone I tried to mark out some worth-while course for myself.

"I had known Mr. Dale since childhood, for his father lived on a small farm but a few miles east of here and the families were on the most intimate terms. During the time I was in college I saw little of him and when I returned here to live he was just starting in law business in Mon-

teith—the small city twenty miles northeast of us.

"In due course of time he called on me, and after that we saw much of each other. I soon discovered I was deeply, genuinely in love with him and I also felt certain my affections were reciprocated. I was equally convinced from the first that he would not propose to me until his professional prospects were much brighter, so, after a few months, I did not exactly propose to *him,* but I encouraged him to talk quite frankly to me and when I was satisfied that he was in earnest I brushed his qualms of pride aside and we were married.

"I induced him to quit the legal profession before he formed any entangling alliances and to stand for the House of Representatives in Washington,—which he did.

"We are equal partners in everything; in possessions, in expense of every kind, in team work in political campaigns and in social work here and in Washington.

"I wanted him in public life, for our country is just entering one of the greatest eras in its history and Congress needs the country's ablest and strongest men, not its puny weaklings, who are

slaves to some local graft-seekers,—but real patriots, with vivid ideals, who will legislate all legitimate government functions into realities, and who will then repeal all the abominable regulation laws which have been placed on the statute books to conceal the crimes they pretend to regulate through pre-subsidized regulators.

"If spiritual salvation is individual, if all evolution of mankind is individual, if sex atoms and characteristics are individual, if happiness and progress are dependent solely upon individual effort and consciousness, then surely any governmental operation is wrong which in peace times tends to crush or dwarf individual development.

"I think straight lines in government are just as valuable as straight lines in business, or in moral conduct, or in right living.

"To help keep them straight was my ambition and I am sure it is James' ambition now."

"Who is taking my name in vain?" came a cheery voice from the hallway.

Mrs. Dale hurried there to greet her husband who had been in the city on business. She came into the room leaning on his arm and radiant with joy. They seated themselves on the sofa in front of the fireplace.

"Well, I suppose the cooing hour has arrived,

Burnett," said Young, addressing me, "and we might as well vanish."

"Not until you tell us why you ceased to have cooing hours yourself. You see if we are really so interlocked in our friendships that we may with impunity inquire about purely personal affairs, then it must not be one-sided," she laughingly said.

CHAPTER IX

A CYNIC'S LOVE STORY

"WHAT makes you think I have ceased to have cooing hours?" asked Young.

"Oh! No one would ever think so, would they, when they hear you talk about marriage and women? They might think you now and then visit a bear's lair, but never the abiding place of the cooing ones."

"Am I not here?" shot back Young instantly.

She laughed, but insisted on an answer to her question.

"Where is that pretty little wife, who was so dainty that she shamed the lilies which she wore the last time you were in Washington? I really believe you have strangled her or adopted other barbarous methods to rid yourself of her, for you have not referred to her in any of your letters for a year."

"Nothing more barbarous than Reno," answered Young.

"Ah, this promises to be racy," and with mocked interest she held her hand to her ear so as not to lose a word.

"There isn't much to it," said Young, grinning cynically. "I discovered she had had a pretty continuous performance at an affair with a wealthy banker from the sixth month after our marriage. We had been married nearly four years at that, too, before I ascertained what was going on. He was purely animal in looks and actions both. Don't tell me that these dainty, little, feminine pieces of Dresden China have any soul or spirit or sense of chastity. I tell you the daintier, more feminine, more clinging they are, the worse the brute that appeals to them."

"You are stating a great scientific truth, Young," said Mr. Dale. "You see you sought the clinging, senseless doll, with cold, pale eyes—and colorful cheeks—the ideal feminine, and you thought how wonderful to possess such a treasure. And then you went away to examine a mine, and she, poor weakling, just followed the instincts of her nature, of which her supposed beauty was the ear mark;—and having neither logic, nor sense of justice, nor large reasoning powers, she fell a victim to the type of man you describe,—for he was her exact mate along sex lines. But they are

not all that way," and Mr. Dale cast a fond glance at his wife.

"Yes,—they—are"—slowly said Young. "Not Mrs. Dale, of course, for she is not *they* by any means. I would trust her to the ends of the earth —but I have never seen another woman that I would.

"Mrs. Dale has filled *her* life with a purpose,— a big splendid purpose, but the others whom I know have only the *big, splendid purpose* of makfools out of men. And they are all alike, too, whether they are wholly feminine, half feminine, or only one-third feminine," said Young emphatically.

"Even my darling duckling would not have fallen for this scientific affinity if he had not been richer than I am," he added.

Mrs. Dale essayed to answer and she was quite serious in tone and manner—"What is it that Tennyson says in the Princess? 'Blame not too much the sons of men and barbarous laws.' Really, for ages women have not known what they did or whither they drifted.

"For centuries, all philosophy,—all religion,— all knowledge of any kind was for men alone. The old Judean prayer was typical of woman's position. The closing sentence was: 'Blessed ar't

thou, O Lord, our God, King of the Universe, who has't not made me a heathen, who has't not made me a slave, who has't not made me a woman.' —And one of their proverbs was: 'A man of straw is better than a woman of gold.' Another amiable sentiment was: 'A dead wife is the best goods in a man's house.' The so-called woman's rights movement of to-day is not so much for the ballot as for a rightful place in the sun of action, of evolution, of spiritual development. To possess the ballot is a mere incident of this movement. It is to possess the right to individual growth so that through their own strength, their own will, the Super-woman may in reality be evolved." Then, looking directly at Young, she added with quiet emphasis:

"The new environment of thought and action is producing thousands of worth-while women every year in every State in the Union. But you men must look out or it will be *you* who are not up to the required standard of intellect, morality or character to make suitable conjugal mates."

This last clearly impressed Young, for he gave rapt attention to every word. Then he assumed his usually careless and cynical air as he said to Mrs. Dale: "I am surprised that you seem to ex-

cuse the laxness of your sex in your championship of the Magdalene of this community."

I was startled, for there was so much of the tragic here, about which Young knew nothing, that I felt sorry for both Mrs. Dale and him that the subject had been touched upon.

She looked hurt—but placidly replied: "No, I neither excuse, approve, nor condemn. I am not the judge. When the Magdalene told me how deeply in love she was and how sacred it all seemed to her—I never asked further questions, but I took her to my heart. In her particular case the man should be treated as a mad dog, and it is too bad the laws are so inadequate in such matters. His life started on the descending line toward abject degradation the day hers started on the ascending line toward courageous and conquering action. She is making a splendid woman of herself and it is a deep sorrow to me that her child's death prevented my giving it all the educational opportunities possible." This last was said with deep emotion.

"I beg your pardon for mentioning the subject. I certainly did not understand the circumstances or I would not have done so," said Young.

"I am convinced of that. You have too generous a western heart to find fault with my action in

this matter," she said sweetly. Then she added: "But I want George," meaning me, and giving me a glance of pride, "to fit himself for public life, just as my husband has done, for he has the principles and ambition and driving force to do great good."

I blushed, confused beyond measure. But Young was back on the firing line with his incisive wit:

"If you can find *your* duplicate who will finance his career before he gets into the traps and snares of an active law practice which will unfit him for any disinterested public service forever thereafter, —I shall agree with you. But the chances are a hundred to one that no fair lady will interest herself in Burnett until he has made a fortune and then *she* will try to grab the fortune through the medium of Burnett. And the other chance is a hundred to one that after she becomes his wife she will be a millstone around his neck in every social, political or business venture of his career. You see, fair lady, you are the only rich woman in America I ever heard of who tried to help a worthy and ambitious young man to achieve honorable fame and to render disinterested public service. The others that I know anything about either spend their money in exploiting themselves

socially at Newport, or in becoming leaders of some local 'smart set' where attenuated morals, depleted appetites and deleted intellects generally hold sway, or in public effort or agitation that widely advertises them, or else some skilled adventurer comes along who fleeces them and leaves them the next year. What show has Burnett in the maelstrom of these statistics?"

She laughed at him, as we all did, and then she fired this verbal shot at him:

"Must women be waited on always to do the obviously fine or generous things of the world?"

Young made no reply,—but it was not many days before he had outlined a plan to get me into the firm of lawyers in Auburn that represented him and some of his clients in his mining investigations. He did this so delicately and in such good taste that I could not give him a negative reply and especially as it was an excellent opening for a young man who had to earn his own livelihood while acquiring a legal education.

I am overjoyed that you understand and approve the friendship between Mrs. Dale and myself and I fully comprehend your fervent thankfulness that "this first ebulition of sentiment should have found such a worthy object of adoration."

CHAPTER X

A BEAUTIFUL LOVE AND A SAD DEATH

AT the close of school on the day that Young made the proposition to me, I went directly to the Dale home. Fortunately I found Mrs. Dale alone. She took me into the music room and asked me to be seated before the fire-place, where a smouldering log was dimly visible, as it threw out just enough heat to off-set the chill of early spring.

My heart was heavy and I must have shown my serious mood, for, knowing my penchant for music, she seated herself at the piano and played my favorites: a Chopin Nocturn, one of Chopin's tantalizingly brief preludes and a night-piece of Schumann.

I soon went over and stood by her.

She smiled at me as she played,—but I noticed there was a look of concern and sadness in her expression.

When she had finished her selections she turned and asked me: "Does your school really close with this week?"

"Yes, day after to-morrow."

"And then?"

"That is what I came to talk with you about," I replied, and related Young's proposition.

"The dear old cynic, isn't it fine of him to be so thoughtful? But he has a heart of gold." Then she looked away from me and out the western window, where the sun was sinking beneath the horizon.

"The Rocky Mountains! Oh, they are so far away and they seem so cold with their purple tops covered with eternal snow. Do you think you will like it there?"

"I cannot possibly like it nearly so well as I do here."

"That is one of the tragedies of life. Just as soon as most of our finest relations with people are established, we are all separated like pieces of a wrecked boat and float far, far apart."

My soul was already full of these thoughts and the tears came to my eyes.

She arose and placed one of her hands upon my shoulder.

"Mr. Dale and I are very fond of you," she said, and her voice trembled.

"I—I——" I could get not farther,—but my eyes were gazing tenderly into hers.

"I—adore—you," I said and as I bent forward she raised her cheek to me and I kissed it.

"Come," she said, as she gently pushed me away, and taking my arm she led me over to the sofa in front of the fire, where she asked me to be seated, as she herself sat down alongside.

"You are homesick to-day, George," she said.

"No," I replied, "just homesick to be with you."

"That is not it at all," she said emphatically. "You are homesick for the *one person* who can make a house a real home for you. I am the embodied echo of the voice that is calling to you from the depths of your nature. I am proud to be *that,* for I think I understand you and I appreciate you. But you must find the *real one* and the sooner the better for your own growth."

"I am always happy when I am with you," I replied.

"That sounds very sweet and really does gratify me, but my dear George, your feeling for me lacks everything of the fire and other elements

of the love you will have for the girl in the mists, when she comes out."

"But what finer, purer love can there be than that which I have for you? I have never seen any woman I wanted to marry, or that I have that sort of love for, unless the love which I bear you is the *real love*. If, as you declare, it is not that sort, then I think Young is more than half right in his theories, and you remember what Montaigne said of the destructiveness of fixed relations and obligations, and that he would not have wedded Wisdom herself if she had asked him. He must have had in mind some of the sort of women Young describes," I said rather nervously.

"Ah, ha!" she smilingly exclaimed, "I see how it all is. There is no danger of a 'fixed obligation' in loving me.—Is that the plummet that sounds the depth of your love?"

"You know I don't mean anything of the sort," I slowly replied. "If you were free, I would propose to you at once."

"Pardon my contradicting you,—but I don't believe you would. I thought my husband was proud enough, but your sensitive pride is ten times as great and I told you how I had to propose to *him*. Then you must remember I am old enough

to be your youngest aunt," she laughingly said.

"Remember, George, what the poet said about Spring and 'a young man's fancy lightly turning to thoughts of love,' and tell me all about Mr. Young's proposition to take you West."

I complied with her wishes and when I had finished, she said: "Of course you must accept. Then when we think of the short time it will take us to go to Auburn by rail and that we must go often to look after the mines, we shall try to see that neither you nor Mr. Young has a chance to forget us."

I have attempted to reproduce as well as I can the atmosphere in which my first devotion to a strange woman was born. Is it a matter of wonder that I should have lost my heart to her completely? I had the feeling that I should never cease to adore her and that age could but add to her charm.

There may be,—I believe there is,—in store for me a complete amalgamation of friendship, poetic love and physical congeniality toward a woman, —but if happiness is the feeling of constantly increasing power toward the goal of high purpose, then this rare friendship and my ability to hold it should have brought me and has brought me great happiness.

Dear Uncle, I have purposely elaborated on the hull and boom and sail and jib and keel of the philosophy and environment with which my bark of theoretical life was constructed and equipped, so that you might the better judge of my actions.

You don't know how devoutly I hope that my conduct may please you.

I am loath even now to mar this beautiful picture of environment and its effect, but as I have truly painted in some detail the influence of daily surroundings upon the young and the old, and particularly upon the young, I must also, to comply with your request, portray the details of the withering blight of a tainted protoplasm upon one sweet but tragic life.

The Garden of Eden had its Serpent and the fairest modern community has its Plague.

The little ten-year-old daughter of the Magdalene was a pupil in my school. She was so delicately constituted that the medical doctor advised she be kept in the country, so she made her home with a sister of the Magdalene who lives in the neighborhood of my schoolhouse. The Magdalene herself lives in two small rooms in Orlando, and earns her livelihood by doing fine sewing.

Little Emily Lunt was the pet of the school.

She was so frail that she aroused the instant sympathy of every person; so gracious that she won their love; and so bright that she commanded their admiration.

She had battled against the "black plague," in the form of ulcers in her throat, for four years. The devoted old country doctor who attended her had, at his own expense, taken her to the best specialist in the neighboring city,—but all to no purpose.

With her, the germ of life was encased in the germ of death, and her outlook upon the beautiful world was through the haze of impending dissolution.

During the early weeks of this term of school she was in regular attendance; then she would occasionally miss a day and as winter deepened she was compelled to quit entirely. I called at her Aunt's house every evening and I saw her physician every day. I induced him to detail everything in a letter to you, but your answer showed no possibility of improving upon the treatment being given.

Her little form gradually faded away and her spirit took its flight on one bleak January night with her mother holding her in her arms and Mr.

and Mrs. Dale and the doctor and myself in attendance.

School dismissed itself the next day, for every pupil was too grief-stricken to study, so they were excused until after the funeral, which was attended by them all. In a general way this community grasped the tragedy of this little life and their souls gave full measure of love and tribute to the heroic struggle which it made to break the immutable bonds that stifled it.

To me this chapter from actual life carries a more vivid lesson than do any of your theories.

That Little Emily was a "love child," in the fullest significance of the usual use of that term, I have no manner of doubt. That it was farthest from the intention or design of any person to give her a heritage of disease I am equally certain.

But what could better illustrate the effects of generations of perverted suggestions as to the triumphant sex traits and demonstrations which, supposedly, constitute love than such a tragic result as that which here wrung our hearts?

And so for a long time I found myself asking myself:

"What is love?"

My term of school is closed and, as I have

told you before, I am going immediately to Auburn, a small city, "Somewhere in the Rocky Mountain Region,"—and into the law office of Simpson and Jarman, who are attorneys for Mr. Young, where I am to be installed as a law clerk and an assistant attorney for magistrate's courts and other services which do not require a license of admission to the bar. Compared with my Illinois income my allowance for this work will be princely. I shall also enter myself at the law department of the local university for the lectures.

I wonder if I shall like it there and I wonder what fate has in store for me?

CHAPTER XI

A ROCKY MOUNTAIN ROMANCE

I HAVE attempted to get a discriminating understanding of the people and conditions here before writing you any letters, aside from those of a purely personal character. If my philosophy is crude or uninteresting please tell me and I shall abandon it. But my reflections lead me into this sort of conclusions:

Portia, Lady Macbeth, Rosalind are good and lovable women and the portrayal of their characteristics show that they lived on the ascending line of thought and action.

"The Merchant of Venice," "Hamlet," "Othello" reflect the particular polarity which dominated the life of each.

But wouldn't it be wonderful if some Twentieth Century Shakespeare would mirror to humanity the natural product of a pure or tainted human protoplasm, as the case might be, evolved

along the lines of any designated environment, with due allowance for the tincture of atavism?

And would we not have more consistent personalities in every pictured word and act, if this latter method were adopted?

These thoughts filled my mind as I undertook to analyze the processes by which some of the prominent personages in my new home reached their existing status.

For instance, I wondered just what were the brands and the constituent elements of each nucleated cell and each particular influence that had produced such diverse people as one of the greatest and most humanitarian of Christian preachers and the most skillful and debased of black-mailers; the winsome, highly cultured, tender, gracious and capable young woman who was at the head of a really great school for girls and who daily helped to promote higher ideals in the two score communities from which her pupils came, and the brilliant, vivacious, magnetic young woman who found her career in catering to a so-called "select social circle" of very limited numbers and more limited activities, and who consumed themselves with affectation and pride as attempted substitutes for the stimulating mental and moral pabulum supplied only by daily and

cordial contact with the human herd; the masterful statesman, who was relegated to private life that the professional reformer might have his place in the sun with his paraphernalia of dyspeptic remedies for imaginary public ills, and his autocratic administration of public office for his own benefit and his wholesale neglect of official duties to promote his private fame and fortune in the public limelight; the numerous individuals who singly and collectively seemed to have foreordained that this community should have no one who towered above the mass whatever means might be necessary to effect the leveling.

It is quite apparent that the spirit of no Lincoln or other Superman controls the thoughts or actions of most of the leaders of this people, and ambitions are as numerous and as various as are the individuals themselves. The one assured thing is that no really high or worthy ideal of any person will be allowed to exist without a mighty effort to destroy or to discredit it.

The professional blackmailer does his best to work his own leaven. The professional reformer exerts himself mightily to obliterate all other political forces. The corrupt party boss has little difficulty in eliminating every rebellious party follower. The "select social circle" has only to give

an adverse whisper to keep any person out of the sacred precincts of the elect.

And yet, such are the tremendous influences of the free, broad, western spirit, which dominates the rank and file, and the inspiring effect of the mountain air, that this community, including the "select social circle," arises to splendid heights of action in most every public emergency.

But the predominating, blighting aspiration of the upper strata is to obtain a plethora of money and to consider no one worth while who has not such possessions. Perhaps the fabulous wealth of the mines and the ease with which it is acquired has much to do with the worship of this fetish.

However, the newness of the relations of this people, gathered as they are from all parts of the world, gives unusual zest and interest to daily life and often furnishes spectacular entertainment to the onlookers.

It is my mission, under your letter of request, to ascertain the influence of all these elements upon the local interpretation of love. My theory of life being based upon the belief that the highest happiness comes from the greatest exercise of all the faculties, I have plunged into every phase of community activity.

I have made many friends and formed numerous associations with congenial people, but I have met no duplicate of Mrs. Dale, neither have I yet been carried off my feet by any scientific or other affinity.

I have had interesting experiences with women, though.

Last year I was much in the household of one family, to whom Young had introduced me, and in which there is a most beautiful young lady,—a year younger than myself—and who is quite ambitious in her studies of music and languages. This family possess a moderate amount of money wealth, with the ever expected millions from mining claims. They recently came from one of the large cities in the middle west to make their fortune and to obtain social dominance in Auburn. This latter is the consuming ambition of the lady of the house and I am certain she would give a fee simple title to eternity, did she own it, for the recognition of the "select social set."

I found that both she and her daughter took an interest in me that was wholly unwarranted by my position or possessions and I was mystified by the invitations and attentions which were showered upon me. It was all so pleasing, how-

ever, that I glided along in the congenial, art atmosphere which surrounded the young lady, until suddenly the spirit of my dreams was somewhat rudely jolted.

It was the habit of Young to accompany me, when he was in the city, in making Sunday afternoon calls on this and two other families, where we were always persona grata.

As I have told you, Young keeps house and I live with him. We are located in a pressed brick dwelling house of nine rooms, in the suburbs, where we have a commanding view of the mountains. We are comfortably situated and do our share of reciprocal entertaining of our friends.

I noticed Young exhibited some concern about our call on this particular family—but he volunteered nothing and I asked no questions.

We went there first, as we had a supper engagement at one of the other homes. The butler, who received us at the door, showed us into the drawing-room with the cabalistic remark that he "didn't know whether the folks were at home or not."

It had been our custom for months to call on these people every Sunday afternoon when we were in the city and I had the particular injunction laid upon me not to fail to call Sunday when

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I had taken the young lady home from the theatre on the preceding Thursday night.

After a long wait the lady of the house appeared, looking bored to distraction, and with the full-grown air of affectation and vacant staring that so characterizes the "select set."

"So sorry to have kept you waiting," she solemnly said to me, proffering a limp hand and repeating the formula to Young.

He cast one of his most diabolical, cynical grins at me.

She did not ask us to be seated. Instead, she said:

"We have been so busy socially that we are worn out and all of us have taken the day off for a rest."

There was nothing to do but to beat a retreat. so we not only went, but we fled.

I was deeply hurt and showed it.

Young laughed.

"The same old story," he said.

"What do you mean?" I answered, with a decided choke to my words.

He became very serious.

"Come," he said, stepping into the waiting automobile, "we will go home and cancel our other engagements by 'phone."

We rode in silence to our home.

I went to my own room and threw myself on the couch and tried to think about what had happened, but I *felt* too keenly to *think*.

This was, indeed, a new experience and a wholly new light on womankind, but I could arrive nowhere in any attempt at reasoning.

It was about an hour after our arrival home that Young gently tapped on my door.

"Come in," I called out. "I am dying to see you."

He entered, and, drawing a chair close to the sofa, ran his hand tenderly over my forehead two or three times.

"I did not think it would hurt you so much or I would not have done any of it for the world," he said earnestly.

"You would not have done what?" I asked in amazement.

"See here, George, I know you better than you know yourself and I am not going to see you or your career, either, wrecked by any of these fortune-hunting women. I know what is passing in your mind—that they could not possibly be after you for a rose-bowered existence, but you are mistaken. I *know* that you will succeed either

with or without one of them, for you have the will to triumph over every handicap. But I want you to be happily and worthily married if you *must marry* at all, which God forbid, and I am doing all I can to cure you of all phases of feminitis."

He was very serious and his face looked troubled and careworn.

"But what has all this to do with our reception this afternoon?" I asked.

"Everything to do with it. Directly after I introduced you to these people the fond Mamma asked me all sorts of questions about you, your family, your fortune, and every personal question in the calendar. I saw a splendid opportunity to do missionary work in the cause of celibacy for you, and in the way of properly rebuking these mercenary husband hunters. So I told a roseate tale. Your family was only two removes from noblemen. Rare wealth awaited your marriage day and I knew you would eventually be sent to New York as General Consul for our Company."

Young paused to look at the effect of his words.

"But why was this princely lying necessary to preserve me?" I asked rather hotly.

"I told her nothing but the absolute truth. Don't you find your answer for her misapprehen-

sion in her devotion to you since that time until I corrected, yesterday, certain unwarranted inferences which she had drawn?" he answered meekly.

Then apparently reading my thoughts of astonishment that he should treat a woman this way, he added: "Oh, I managed the disillusion just as diplomatically as I did the illusion. She paved the way as usual and I deftly explained that the rich relative who had made you an heir had met with financial reverses, which threatened to consume his entire fortune, and how sorry I was for you.

" 'But,' I added to her, 'the loss of his prospective fortune will make all of *us real friends* much fonder of him,' and I gave her a direct glance.

"She shifted her eyes, grew pale and pink by turns, and finally found voice to say: 'I suppose, Mr. Young, *that nobleman* story was of the same brand as the millionaire story?'

" 'They were both true stories,' I steadily replied. 'This young man's grandfather was second in command to Commodore Perry at the Battle of Lake Erie, and all history agrees that every officer and seaman in that fleet were not only noblemen, but patriots. Does that not make George only

two removes from a nobleman?' I emphatically asked. 'You are mistaken, madam, when you say I even intimated that George would inherit a million dollars. I said "rare wealth," and he will. It is true, for George told me so himself, that his famous doctor uncle did lose a considerable part of his modest fortune in money in bad investments, but that has nothing to do with the fact that the rare trophies and souvenirs presented to this uncle by sovereigns and other dignitaries the world over are to go to George on his wedding day.'

"She was desperately mad at me, and, as soon as I politely could, I left. Now you have the whole story," he said, resignedly, with a quizzical look on his face.

"Knowing all this, why didn't you tell me in advance of our call, and spare me the humiliation of such an interview?" I imploringly asked.

"That is what I told you I was sorry for," he replied. "I had no idea it would hurt you so much. But then that shows that you were getting deeply interested, or else you were forming a bad habit of association which was bound to give you sorrow whenever it was terminated, and this sort of an end was always inevitable. These were

the things of which I wished to cure you and I knew something like what happened would ensue, whenever we called."

I did not immediately reply. I had had abundant proof of Young's fine, constant, big friendship for me and I knew that he felt a paternal interest in my welfare, but what he failed to understand was the wholly different character of the demands of our natures. *I* suffered unutterably from the lack of congenial women associates. *Young* missed none of them. They were necessary to *my* best thought and work. All women alike, except Mrs. Dale, acted as a mental and physical poison to Young. I derived genuine joy and inspiration from my association with the young lady of this family, although I was not conscious of being in love with her, nor that she loved me. Young could not understand *this* at all. He took the usual masculine view of the association of men and women, although he was far above the average man in intellect, experience and culture. I knew how useless it would be to try to make him understand my viewpoint. *He* was convinced that my attentions meant matrimony and he was more certain that the mother not only thought *this* but that she was determined they should mean *this*.

These considerations, passing, as they did, rap-

idly through my mind, showed me the lesson which Young thought could best be conveyed to me through this process.

"All this is most unfair to the young lady and, of course, will cause her unhappiness," I said.

"That *may* be true," he slowly answered. "I am sorry for her *if it is true*. But that, also, had to come some time and it is much better it should come through acts of her own mother, than through anything you might do or say. I am inclined to believe the young lady is a sincere and loyal friend regardless of monetary considerations, but, if she is, she had already been hurt many times by her mother and understands the reasons, and, if she is not sincere and loyal, then we need not care much about the manner of ending the relations."

This chapter in my life seemed closed and it was idle to attempt to resuscitate it by arguing with Young. The next day I sent the young lady a box of American Beauty roses accompanied by a large bunch of violets and received a sweet and perfectly befitting note of acknowledgment.

This has been a bitter experience for me and I fear I do not know how to take such things. I felt that another hour had, indeed, sounded and

the watchman of my soul called faintly out: "All is well."

But all was not well. I received a wound to my spirit and a shock to my faith in women that has left scars and unpleasant sensations.

I had presumed to trust these people implicitly, and it never occurred to me that we could ever be aught else than good friends.

Wherein did I fail to make proper allowance? Was it in polarity, or in the influence of ascending or descending lines of thought or action? Had Young not removed the mask I would have portrayed characters in these ladies for you that would not at all have been the natural outcropping of their heredity or environment,—or, in other words, of their real selves, as they were certain, sooner or later, to exhibit themselves.

I suppose this will act as another justification for you Philadelphians to maintain the extreme care which you exercise to know much about ancestors and lives of individuals before taking such individuals into the realms even of acquaintanceship. As I see it, though, the defect in this system is that gossip is often taken in place of real chronology and none of it properly allows for tainted protoplasms or the various shades of en-

vironment upon numerous and diverse temperaments.

All of which makes clear the demand for a Twentieth Century Shakespeare who will give us the natural product emanating from these several influences.

Why don't you undertake that role?

You certainly have the proper equipment and my experience shows that you cannot successfully transmit your wisdom.

CHAPTER XII

SIDELIGHTS ON IDEALS

I AM now a full-fledged attorney-at-law and a voting citizen. I have set up "shop" for myself and with Young's law business and his powerful influence as assets I think my professional future should be reasonably safe, from a business standpoint, at least. I don't like the letters I have sent to you since that affair with what Young calls "the fortune hunters," so please destroy them and let this one serve as a substitute following that affair.

If Young did not actually neglect business to be near me for the next few weeks, he surely must have postponed engagements away from Auburn, for he was with me more constantly than during any previous period of my residence with him.

He did everything possible to divert my mind and we went much to the theatre, and both of us being fond of golf and bridge-whist, we whiled

away several hours of recreation each week at these games. In seeking women companions for me I noticed that he was particular to see that our associates were generally women with husbands, but with no eligible daughters.

You must not form the idea that Young is not a kind-hearted or companionable man. He is both to a rare degree. He is strong in his nature and in his opinions and the shattering of his ideals concerning women is the only blight on an otherwise sweet-tempered and charming personality. He despises the shams and deceits of life and people of ulterior motive seldom find him unaware of their wiles.

His business requires him to participate actively in politics and he misses nothing of the humor or pathos of the devious game.

One morning he came late to the breakfast table, looking more serious than usual, and I wondered what problem was impending. He was even a little brusque in his greeting to both myself and his faithful old housekeeper who has been with him for years and who treats him as a foster son.

He ate in silence for several minutes and seemed altogether sombre and sad.

"Whose funeral do you attend to-day?" I lightly inquired.

"It will be yours soon, if you don't get away from your silly idealities and sillier association with that breeder of political hallucinations—Judge Bedford," he replied in rather an acrid tone.

"The 'Cormorants' either are about to meet or else have just met—which is it?" I good-naturedly replied.

He looked at me and grinned.

"They meet to-night and I want you to go there with me," he said. "It is impossible for you to know about practical affairs if you do not mix more with practical people. You must get into politics if you would succeed in law, for no lawyer can properly understand laws, or courts or public officials if he is not familiar with the persons and the powers that make them all."

I had so often refused this invitation and he had so often urged me to go that I resolved to please him if I could get him to bargain to meet Judge Bedford, whom he had declined to see as often as I had declined to go with him to the Cormorants.

I had a pretty fair idea of the methods of the

Cormorants, and I wanted to make sure of my own political ideals before I went very far into the practical game and I had found Judge Bedford a source of inspiration along every line of political thought. I knew Young would admire him if he could be brought to know him intimately.

"I will go," I said, "if you will help me entertain Judge Bedford at dinner to-morrow evening."

Young prides himself on his sporting blood, so he accepted the challenge.

I should explain that "The Cormorants" is the name by which an organization of political party workers, which Young helps to maintain financially, is popularly known. It is composed mostly of those who thrive on city contracts of various kinds and those who hold or expect city offices or jobs. But the "Cormorants" have no idea of financing themselves in any campaign. The contributions for this not altogether philanthropic society come jointly and severally from a few large business enterprises whose promoters seem to think that life is pleasanter, their idolized dollars brighter, their social standing higher in exact proportion to their ability to shift the burdens of government off themselves and on to others where

they do not justly belong and as they can conversely appropriate the benefits of government to their own enrichment and glory. The "Cormorants" also reap a rich harvest from gullible millionaires who attempt to buy their way into high public office.

The "Cormorants" are essentially practical. At "popular general elections" and "popular nominating primary elections," they are required to see that their election precincts make the returns desired by those who furnish the money for the control of government, regardless of what political party ticket it is sought to elect from time to time. Naturally, the "Cormorants" have to be versatile, maybe I should say agile, in their political convictions. But they are always in dead earnest, whatever party they support, and every person is a "party traitor" who does not follow their lead. And this last argument seems to have more weight than I imagined it could have. The fear of being called a "party traitor" by those in control of the party organization, however temporary such control may be or however vile the purpose they attempt to serve at the time, seems to influence more votes than does rational argument or private conviction, or individual sense of justice, or even downright corruption.

The "Cormorants" have their sonorous voices well trained to shout effectively, "party traitor."

Young knows they possess all these qualities and he helps to make them proficient in their use, and in his heart he approves these methods in controlling all branches of government.

Yet Young is an honest, conscientious man in every sort of a private business transaction. Judge Bedford says there are scores of business men like Young in every part of the United States, and that these men reason similarly to the foolish women who oppose suffrage for their sex on the theory that government is so much a thing apart from the ordinary affairs of life that the feminine intellect could never understand it and the feminine character could never withstand it. Except, Judge Bedford says, that these men also reason that no great number of the voters, men or women, can or will take interest enough in this "thing apart from ordinary life" to vote discriminatingly, and therefore *they* might better control their votes with *their* money and for the protection of *their* money than to allow the demagogues to control their votes with *their* voices and for transient and empty purposes, and that these influences try to make our democracy mean Mediocrity (with a big M) in government officials, and

they insist that *their* door-mats look better in offices than do the door-mats of the demagogues.

Judge Bedford also says that this result is the more easily obtained through our present political parties, from the fact that generally they are operated locally by persons who have no moral or business standing in their respective communities.

Young often expresses his theory to me in this way:

"Ever since the first cave man started to govern with a club down to this blessed day, whatever the form of government, the real power of government has swung successively from the tyrant to the demagogue and then back again to the tyrant. I prefer to play the role of a subordinate, but clean-cut, tyrant rather than attempt the impossible feat of being an insincere, or wild-eyed demagogue."

This community furnishes vivid illustrations of both tyrants and demagogues. Set over against the "Cormorants" and kindred organizations, is a body of men and women (for women vote here) called by the people generally, "The Reformers." There are many sincere and devoted idealists and genuine patriots in this body and these believe in educating the mass of citizens into independent and intelligent voters upon all public questions

and candidates, regardless of every political consideration and solely with the end in view of giving this City and the State the best possible government.

But these latter persons are but a fraction of the organization.

The leaders, and the majority of the members, desire the offices and powers of government for their own purposes just as ardently as do the "Cormorants" and from no more worthy motives.

Judge Bedford belongs to neither of these crowds.

He is by far the brainiest man in the State and, I think, the most disinterested patriot.

For these reasons he is assailed venomously by the orators of both sides, for, he says, neither the corrupt party machine nor the demagogic reformers can long withstand the persistent assaults of patriots with brains enough to make their convictions felt by the multitude. And thus it is that the really able and honest men in every community, who try to make government function honestly and efficiently, are so vilified that they soon drop all personal concern in the affairs of politics and government, and in this way the corrupt party machines maintain their sway.

He is too honest to his own intellect and char-

acter to affiliate with either of them and he paints their purposes and peccadillos too accurately to be commended by them as a great artist. He has been on the Supreme Court bench of the State and has served two terms in the House of Representatives at Washington.

He is the best trial lawyer in the State and a psychologist of considerable attainments.

While he has no use for the "Cormorants," he considers them honorable when compared with the "Reformers," for he is certain *they* obtain their sustenance at the back door of the same establishment where the "Cormorants" are fed at the front door.

As I told you in my first letter from here, I am mixing in every branch of Community activity and as politics is the perennial topic of discussion here, and political ambition the supreme motive power behind public enterprises of all kinds, I must give you a peep into the local political arena or you never can understand anything concerning this people.

A gay and festive and vivid life is that of an Auburn politician, and I am sure its depiction will not bore you.

CHAPTER XIII

SOME CORNER STONES OF LOVE AND GOVERNMENT

To resume my duties as political curtain raiser:

The "Cormorants" have a spacious hall with numerous well-furnished waiting- or lounging-rooms for their headquarters, which are on one of the old-time principal streets over a wholesale liquor house.

When Young and I arrived they were discussing the approaching municipal election.

The candidates this time are pretty well lined up with and for their respective parties and the campaign promises to be decided along party, instead of personal, lines.

This is not exactly pleasing to the "Cormorants," for opportunity to them bears richer harvests when they can undertake individual campaigns along with party work.

The flight of oratory which greeted our ears,

as we entered unobserved and quietly sought the nearest seats, was from an ex-Police Officer who ardently desires reinstatement by the next Mayor, but, who, meantime, more ardently desires a considerable quantity of ready cash—"for campaign uses," of course.

What we heard was this:

"This ain't no sort of an election.—Why—the Chairman of the Republican Committee has told all candidates they sha'n't give us no money, but every cent must go through his hands and we are only to git the measly hundred dollars apiece each Committeeman gits for his precinct. This is a thirty-cent fight."

Just then the Chairman espied Young and he rapped for order, thus shutting the ex-officer off.

Young was called on for a speech and they gave him a noisy reception.

I think I was a stumbling block to any oratory from Young for he arose from his seat and told them to go right along just as though we were not there for we were both in full sympathy with them and wanted to hear just what they would say among themselves.

I noticed they watched their verbs pretty carefully from that on and the most of them used fairly good English.

A young man with red hair took the floor. He is a large contractor in street and other work for the city.

"At our last meeting," he said, "the question came up about having women in our club. I'm opposed to that. When we get our plans all laid and know what we want to do ourselves it's easier to tell them what to do in their own club than it would be here. They don't understand the complications of our situation, at times."

Young looked at me and smiled, but the others were very solemn.

The red-headed orator sat down amidst the endorsing applause of his hearers, and a bald-headed, middle-aged man arose. He had the contract for the disposal of the city garbage which is supposed to net him about $20,000 per year.

"We've got to do a lot of training of our people on these emblems. Those 'Reformers' who have made a ticket composed of some Democrats and some Republicans have taken both Lincoln and Jefferson as the emblems. They're running the same candidates, part of 'em ours and part Democratic candidates, on two tickets to catch both Republicans and Democrats and we've got to look out for we have only the Elephant alone this time, and last time we had both the Elephant and

Rooster, for our fellows were on both tickets. This thing has got to be done right and we'll have to set up night schools on this ballot until election day. I think we ought to get a lot of buttons with the Elephant on them with the words:

"Vote this emblem."

A motion was put and unanimously carried to adopt his suggestion concerning the buttons.

I looked at Young in disgust.

"Is that the way voters are herded and trained?" I asked.

"This is the way to get a successful result," he replied.

"Your friend Judge Bedford talks to big crowds in every campaign but no one shows them how to vote and the chances are that most of them don't know how to find the polling places.

"This emblem business will be done away with at the next election but I tell you thousands of intelligent people will not know how to vote without the emblems, unless they are thoroughly trained how to vote the new ballot."

The balance of the discussion was about volunteer conveyances to take voters to the polls; (a new law prevented hiring conveyances for this

purpose); about cards, leaflets, badges, buttons, ribbons, to educate and identify each voter; about effective methods to inform voters they would be ostracized if they did not vote right. Then Young had me meet each one of the "Cormorants." He had plans for my future of which I did not approve and he wanted to show me how easy it would be to get the result.

I was heart-sick as we went home. Young understood this, but he could not sympathize with me for he did not agree with my viewpoint.

What bothered me was to get the correct analysis of the worth-whileness of all this in any rational scheme of life.

I pondered—but to no purpose. Judge Bedford has his own reasons and I believe they are the correct ones for the cure of most of our social and political ills. I shall give them to you in as condensed form as possible so as to convey his points and his pungent reasons for them.

You may be interested, first, in his characteristics, for I am absorbing much of my fundamental information about politics and government from him.

The head and bust of Judge Bedford are almost identical with a replica which I have seen of the

head and bust of Demosthenes in marble, as exhibited in the Museum at Athens.

He has the same spacious forehead, the same sort of beard, the same square shoulders, the same strong, intense face and eyes, the same embryo baldness that characterize that reproduction of the head and shoulders of the greatest of Greek orators.

In the art of expressing in phrases beautiful and vivid visions I have never heard Judge Bedford excelled.

His rhetoric is chaste and musical without detracting from its strength or ruggedness. But the overpowering influence in his personality is his unaffected earnestness, sincerity and devotion to conviction.

One of his old-time friends said of Judge Bedford recently:

"He tried to use his superb endowments to promote the honor and glory of his country, but he entered the service at the very hour commercialism struck down idealism in our political affairs and when legislative bodies were often overrun either with rich men who purchased the title bauble of fame as a family heirloom, or with weaklings who were perfectly willing to serve as

official messengers for the business interests that sent them there.

"But Judge Bedford's philosophy and ambition go hand in hand.

"His ambition is to utilize every experience for the evolution of himself and his happiness is in the knowledge that he constantly grows spiritually and mentally."

In speaking to me once about a public career for myself, Judge Bedford used this earnest language:

"If circumstances are such that you can render a distinct and needed service to your country or community make whatever sacrifice is necessary to do so. But don't expect any other reward than that of your own spiritual growth. Above everything, never seek public office for any honor it can confer upon you.

"No honestly ambitious man, who knows that the acme of human existence is his own highest development, which can only be obtained by constant growth for a life-time, can be honored by seeking or obtaining anything from electorates, when they have been trained to judge all men indiscriminately from the viewpoint of petty prejudices or jealousies, utterly regardless of the brains or the souls which they possess. All rules of fair

dealing between man and man seem to go into the scrap heap when one enters the political game and those who could easily be punished for libel and blackmail in private affairs seem to be immune when assailing candidates for office and public officials."

I spend many hours every week with this wonderful man and I am anxious to have Young know him as I do.

CHAPTER XIV

IDEALS OF LOVE AND GOVERNMENT

JUDGE BEDFORD dined with Young and myself according to agreement and the three of us composed the dinner party.

Judge Bedford says that the cultured people of America always shy away from reading anything that is at all enlightening, concerning either politics or government, and then sneer at the incompetency of public officials and the inefficiency of public administration.

Young says that this is all too true, therefore why should not the few promoters that exploit the public through politics in every community be considered benefactors, for they at least take the pains to understand the game, which the great mass of the voters do not? He says that men, women and children want to vote, but that few of them care to vote comprehendingly.

Personally, I am desirous of understanding the

fundamentals of government and the perils in the operation of our own splendid system, and Judge Bedford's illuminating and entertaining style of discussion makes every proposition stand out like a cameo in a beautiful setting.

For that reason, I am quoting him as literally as possible.

He makes it very clear how the operations of politics and government affect the standards and ideals of love, and how genuine love among the people generally is wholly impossible with a degraded or corrupt administration of government. If he is right, then his views should be of supreme interest to every person.

Judge Bedford's mind is so richly stored with such a variety of information that he and Young unconsciously floated off into a long discussion of geological formation in various sections of our state, and it was with delight that I saw Young melting and rapidly changing his preconceived ideas concerning the Judge.

In this way Young is one of the biggest and most generous men I know and when he is convinced he has done another person even a mental injustice, he leaves nothing undone to make amends. I knew now that was what would take place with Judge Bedford and naturally I was

joyous at the prospect of having the Judge one of our frequent guests.

Then you must remember the Judge is not lacking in skill, and, while nothing had ever been said about Young's feelings toward him, he must instinctively have known them and he probably determined to captivate the firm but often volatile Young on his own account.

Whatever may have been the process he used the result most desired by me was achieved.

Finally Young turned to Judge Bedford and said:

"Judge, I want to make this young man District Attorney, but he will have none of it. Please help me appeal to his ambition. The compensation is almost princely, for it is a fee office and the business is enormous."

The Judge looked at me quizzically before answering.

"I would prefer to learn my profession from the grass roots and by hard knocks," I replied.

"Ordinarily—that is the best way," answered the Judge. Then turning to Young he added:

"You would nominate and elect him through the influence or machinery of the 'Cormorants'? Would they expect to control him after election

or could he be perfectly free-handed to pursue his own course?"

Young blushed and looked confused. If he had not changed his opinion about the Judge he probably would have given him to understand that this part did not concern him.

But he had no desire to antagonize the Judge, neither did he wish to mislead him. So he quietly replied:

"Of course the 'Cormorants' would want to control the Emperor if we had one and they certainly would expect to control George if they made him District Attorney, for they often have need of a friend in that office. Then, of course, George knows that my business friends must not be disturbed."

"I guess George is right. The grass roots look better than this," said the Judge.

"Now, Judge, there you go with your 'idealistic hallucinations,' as I call them to George. Won't you ever learn that the controlling forces of society must rule all other strata or soon there would be no social structure, and how can this be done except through public officials operating government in the interest of those who place them in power?"

The Judge looked vexed and somewhat mystified.

" 'The controlling forces of society must rule all other strata,' " he slowly repeated.

"You do not want the government of Scientific Socialism in this country?" he asked Young so earnestly that Young immediately replied:

"Certainly not."

"If I were the dreamer you think I am," said the Judge, addressing Young, "I would be for that most beautiful and confiding theory of government called 'Scientific Anarchy,' founded on the presumption that human nature, with no laws or regulation of restraint, will better observe the Golden Rule than it will under the lash, or bound by the fetters, of government. But I do not believe this. Neither do I think Scientific Socialism, as now advocated, is adapted to present human aspirations or needs. But I tell you, Mr. Young, your theories and the theories of many other managers of big business in America, supplemented by your co-operative efforts to control all government for yourselves, are hastening the triumph of some form of general socialism where the dollar will be in another stratum of society instead of in the ruling one."

Young looked hurt at this as he always did

whenever any person disagreed with him on those subjects.

"But, Judge, what else can be done without having chaos or disorder in government in this country?" he pleadingly asked.

With a little tinge of sarcasm in his tones, the Judge replied: "There used to be a wholesome and inspiring legend loose around these United States when I was a boy that we were a 'Republic,' a 'glorious Republic'—'the greatest Republic on earth.' " Then becoming deeply serious he added: "And we are all of that, notwithstanding our foibles and short-comings at times."

He paused for Young to ask questions—but it was apparent that Young wanted him to go on. I knew the reason was that Young had thought the Judge was a "wild-eyed Anarchist or a sentimental Socialist," as he had described him, and it was beginning to dawn on him that the Judge was not only rational but conservative and his prejudice was giving way before logic.

"Please keep on," he urged.

"If I will not bore you," the Judge said, "I shall briefly try to outline what you busy commercial men have not had time to elucidate to yourselves and to connect these governmental theories with their influence upon the greater ques-

tion of human love, in the study of which George is immersed.

"They are so intimately related and interdependent that you cannot go far with one without forcing in the door of the other. It takes the social student, the sociological student, the student of psychology, all combined properly to appreciate the fine, deep, splendid foundations upon which our governmental structure was placed. The manner in which some of the powerful influences of this nation have been trying to destroy those foundations would be an unforgivable crime if they could not plead ignorance of criminal intent. In fact they are acting through crass ignorance and nothing else. They went so far in their selfish efforts to gain all government power for themselves and their few interests to the sacrifice of all other elements of society that they placed this nation face to face with a titanic struggle between the forces seeking to establish absolute socialism and those desiring a genuine Republic, such as our forefathers planned. No thinking person wants any mixed, hodge-podge institution by socializing innately private enterprises, and leaving to private operation inherent government functions. What I earnestly desire in every operation of legislation and administra-

tion is a Hamilton-Jefferson Republic, with all public functions in charge of the government and all private business protected from the evil assaults of the wicked members of society, with equal opportunity for all and special privilege for none, in theory and in fact.

"In all the ebb and flow of the political tides of demagogy and special privilege, alternating in their turn at fooling the people,—be it said to their everlasting credit, that the Labor Unions of America have stood solidly for a Republic, operated as a Republic, and not as a feudal state on one hand, or as a socialist experiment on the other."

This made a deep impression on Young, as it did on me. When the Judge stopped, Young said instantly: "Please, Judge, finish with the connection of all this to the relation of the sexes and human love. You know I need much argument to convince me that any government on earth can make marriage, or so-called love between the sexes, anything but the degraded and destructive thing it is and always has been."

The Judge looked a little surprised at Young's earnestness, for he understood his cynicism, but he continued:

"Have you read your history carefully about

the causes of the downfall of Greece and Rome?"

"Reasonably so," Young replied.

"Let us then draw the distinction between the popular belief that it was the luxury and effeteness, which wealth brought, and the real cause of the downfall, which was an absolute change of national ideals concerning what was worth while as the aim of human existence. That is quite independent of wealth or poverty in individual or nation, but very much dependent upon the measure of individual freedom and ambition and opportunity and the protection from evil furnished the individual for development and growth by the government.

"How can the ideal of love be fine, poetic, inspiring, when every other ideal in life is craven and sordid? And if marriage is consummated on the plane of degradation, how can the offspring have dreams with wings to them to carry them to the heights of happiness?

"During the awful period of commercialism through which our nation has been passing, we not only lost our old-time veneration for our form of government and brought all ideals of love down to the bargain counter level, but the very sordidness of those ideals led to their supposed gratification through channels that left one person out

of every twelve of our population, or over eight millions of our people, cursed with 'the black plague.' "

I gave vent to an exclamation of surprise at these figures, but the Judge reiterated and emphasized them. Turning to Young he continued:

"Please do not think me ungenerous, Mr. Young, in using as I shall what you said earlier in our conversation,—but I wonder how many there are of this eight millions 'in the controlling forces of society,' or in the other strata, for that matter, in this community alone.

"And you must remember that the great majority of all criminals, and the greater majority of all insane, and a vast percentage of spinal, nervous and purely physical wrecks, come from this army of plague-stricken people, made such through perverted ideals of love and human sex relations.

"You see if the blind are not to lead the blind the necessity for some other line of cleavage between those who should lead and those who must be lead than that created by the possession of, or devotion to, the dollar, must be found.

"As you know, I defend more criminal cases than all the lawyers combined at this bar and I defend successfully the greater number of them

almost entirely on the ground that the particular defendant is irresponsible, or wholly justified, according to the opportunity he has had to possess clean blood, proper early training and something that looks like a fair opportunity in the industrial or commercial struggle for existence.

"Organized society owes him all these things and organized society (which is government) should not be permitted to punish one of its own members when he is only the natural product of its dereliction."

This last nettled Young and he started to reply, but the Judge raised his hand.

"Just a moment, please," he said. "Understand this clearly, now, for many who hold your views really do not understand this question at all.

"Under a Republic the policy must be enforced that every government function *must be exercised by collective society* so that no individual shall be at the mercy or under obligation to any other individual for the assured protection of government in his rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, which includes an absolutely equal opportunity with all his fellow citizens in private life and in private business enterprises.

"This assures individual responsibility—which the history of the world amply demonstrates pro-

duces individual growth and development—and, as the Christ teaches, leads to individual Salvation, for does He not say, 'the Kingdom of God is within you'?

"Under this system of government, honestly and uniformly carried into effect, the 'black plague' and its attendant evils of crime, insanity and numerous physical ills that destroy the intellect and soul, as well as the body, would be almost wiped out, for the *improved* ideals and more strenuous ambitions of the individual would obliterate the principal cause of its existence.

"In the ancient autocracies of the world these evils were mitigated, for the reason that the masses, through blind and ignorant devotion to the source of authority, accepted without question the regulations which thwarted such evils. The Scientific Socialists claim this would be the result of their dominion through the universal leveling which would make all co-operate on exactly the same plane of opportunity and effort.

"They may be right, but I cannot convince myself that individual aspiration would find in Socialism the necessary incentive to lead the soul or intellect into its highest possible realms of human existence.

"Pardon me again, Mr. Young, but let me

show you just how *your* system is more destructive to wholesome sex ideals than any of these other systems could possibly be.

"The methods and purposes of government control and operation attempted by certain private enterprises in this country are so obvious that no person is deceived concerning them. There is nothing in them or about them to fire the ambition or zeal or devotion of the general public or even of their own employees, for their tenure of employment and compensation, under this system, is most uncertain and indefinite.

"Therefore, you people not only abolish the equal opportunity which a Republic should assure to the masses, but you are not powerful enough and great enough to appeal to their imagination and thus command their devoted service, as the benevolent autocracies did, and, of course, there is not much of the Socialistic leveling process of your own crowd attaching to any part of your operations.

"What is the resultant effect on social life and ideals?

"I do not know the exact statistics, but a large percentage of your own dominating leaders have been in the divorce courts, at least once, and a large percentage of the others entertain or avow

ideals on the sex question that are not compatible with either the religious or scientific theory of the best growth and development possible along these lines.

"But the blighting effect of your system is upon the millions forming a part of your organizations, for they are left without the strenuous life of absorbing purpose which equal chance for success furnishes and which is essential to the best spiritual and physical growth of every person. If this nation ever gets into a great foreign war you will instantly see the magical effect of this equal opportunity and the resultant absorbing purpose of all classes to fight side by side in the army of Democracy. And you will also discover that the best soldiers will be those who are the most highly evolved individually."

"Judge," said Young cordially, "I admire your logic and I now understand and respect your viewpoint, but I cannot agree with your conclusions. Isn't your dream of an ideal Republic just as difficult of realization as are the dreams of the Scientific Socialist? Of course," he said lightly, "your dissertation on sanctifying marriage is a splendid tribute to your vivid imagination but if the permanence or stability of Greece and Rome depended upon the sanctity of the marriage rela-

tion, it is surprising they lasted as long as they did.

"Take this community, for example. Suppose big business should keep hands off, what sort of government would you have? Would 'The Reformers' be any better or more responsible than our crowd, or would you be any nearer a perfect Republic?"

The Judge looked searchingly at Young for a moment, then, giving to his expression all the contempt which he must have felt, answered:

"'The Reformers!' What a crime that they should be permitted to degrade a worthy title. I joined forces with them once in opposing the granting of a thieving franchise for a leading utility company, but the fight had not gone far when the stockbroker friend of one of the leaders convinced him that the utility company had sprouting angel's wings, which would develop after the new franchise was granted, and I guess you, Mr. Young, know how another of these leaders was converted, for you people gave him an important office the next year."

Young nodded a cynical assent and the Judge continued:

"One of them last year dropped what, with any-

one else, would have been called a matter of life-time conviction on a great national question and supported the advocates of an entirely different theory of government, with the result of getting an appointive office under a national party which had always opposed every vital tenet of his avowed political principles.

"Understand me. I have no sort of use for the voter who prides himself on 'always having voted the party ticket straight'; or the champion of good government who will not make political and other sacrifices to get the best possible public result, but I have abject contempt for that breed of solemn-faced demagogues who parade around in every campaign either to keep themselves in the public lime-light or covertly to get some office, advocating some new political fad or fanciful political dream, which they do not believe in themselves and which is wholly at variance with all their former professions.

"The professional reformer is worse than the professional politician and no progress toward either good or honest government can be made with either of them."

Young emphatically endorsed this last sentence and the Judge added:

"But here, Mr. Young, is a plan of co-operation of pretty good elements that will always keep a real Republic in this country.

"Three of the cleanest types of American citizens, in health, in morals, in spiritual understanding, in general intelligence, in downright patriotism, are the Women Voters, the Labor Unionists and the Farmers.

"They belong together in politics just as naturally as ducks belong in the water and all are by instinct and interest for a genuine Republic.

"The time is here when they will co-operate in all political affairs.

"There is one other group of citizens, with no less worthy attributes, which belongs just as naturally with these forces as they belong together and that is the group which operates every legitimate business enterprise that does not undertake to dictate or control government for selfish purpose.

"None of these people want socialism. Neither will they tolerate any form of feudalism.

"I should think your business, which is not a government enterprise by any means, would naturally belong in this combination.

"I know your answer is that you often have to get part of the public domain and the transporta-

tion question is important to you, and your present participation in politics helps you to control the government regulators of railway rates.

"Why don't you boldly put aside all fears about temporary results and get the great, big, splendid results which are certain to come to *your* business, and to every other legitimate business in America under the untrammelled operation of a Republic?

"Half the money, which your company and its allies expend yearly to maintain corrupt political machines, so you may control public utility commissions on transportation rates and land boards on the favorable purchase or lease of public lands, —used in propaganda work to glorify the Republic, would return you fourfold what it does now,—and, what saviors of wretched souls in a perverted social system you would be."

There was unaffected eloquence and genuine fervor in this appeal and it moved Young more than anything I had ever observed. It was apparent that he was deeply impressed, although not converted.

The political topic was then dropped.

The Judge remained another hour, but he spent the time in examining Young's well-selected library and in discussing fine literature with us both.

CHAPTER XV

THE BLACK PLAGUE AND CRIME

I HAVE already told you that I did not permit myself to be inducted into the office-holding ranks.

The only temptation there was to go into politics consisted in the opportunity the District Attorney's office must afford for the acquisition of valuable information concerning many phases of life and government not easily obtained elsewhere.

But the desire to achieve fame solely as a lawyer and on my merits of skill and ability as a lawyer, far outweighed any transient fame or temporary glory which a political career might insure.

I mean an honorable lawyer, of course, and not one who rents his brains and skill to those who, either singly or collectively, are exploiting or planning to exploit the public with some business enterprise which the community itself should possess as a matter of right for the better promotion of good and honest democratic government.

However, I have not been idle in trying to get by indirection that which I did not care to obtain directly and I have some very interesting occurrences to relate to you which are in line with your request to me for special information.

The present District Attorney here was elected three years ago and recently re-elected on his standing as an able, fearless, just and honorable lawyer.

It is probably unnecessary to tell you that he was elected both times on a non-partisan ticket.

He has related some of his experiences to me which reflect, better than I can, various side lights on affairs here, and some of which strike the root of hidden evil everywhere.

I shall use his language and not my own:

"It was well that I went into office three years ago unshackled for I was soon in the midst of prosecuting state officials for fraudulent supply contracts and for keeping interest on public funds, city officials for police and other frauds, and prominent business men for renting property for criminal purposes.

"I felt the full power of the tremendous pressure which political machines and big business can bring to bear upon public officials, but I man-

aged to see these prosecutions through to successful conclusions.

"I had the devoted support of Judge Bedford at all times and no one could induce him to defend a case when I assured him I had examined every detail of the charge personally.

"He had trained me into his methods of applying psychological tests to suspect criminals and I tried earnestly to fulfill the duty of the public prosecutor, 'to protect the innocent as well as to prosecute the guilty.'

"In the investigation of larceny charges some time ago, preferred against two high school students, I got the full confidence of the boys charged with these offenses and they unraveled a tale to me that made my blood run cold.

"Not only were they guilty of these larcenies, but they had taken much other money from various people at different times for the purpose of gratifying and demonstrating their manly powers so that they might the more surely fulfill the complete mission of love when they should eventually marry.

"A chief part of the confession which they made was that their theory, as learned from men, was that this course was absolutely essential to their present health and subsequent happiness.

"Their visitation places were in the lower part of the city where some rich men had erected small houses for what the police called 'Oriental Women.'

"It transpired that each of these boys had the 'black plague.'

"I immediately sought an interview with their fathers and told them the whole, harrowing tale.

"I had my heart wrung many times during these three years, but never more so than by the grief of these parents.

"I considered it no part of my mission to make or to confirm criminals, so I arranged for their liberty on proper money restitution and the immediate sending of the boys to a suitable medical institution.

"I had a Grand Jury in session, so I promptly indicted the unfortunate women outcasts and piled up all the indictments the law would authorize against the owners of these houses.

"The first offenders were permitted to leave the city and the second were given the choice of standing trial or demolishing the houses.

"They chose the latter and the court was satisfied.

"A peculiar murder took place in Auburn one night.

"A man who was a boarder at a small house in the old part of the city was called to the back door about nine o'clock and another man wearing a knit jacket and a slouch hat talked with him for a few minutes about the butcher's bill for the household and as the first man turned to go into the house he was shot in the back and lived but a few hours. He remained conscious until he sank into the stupor of death, but he was unable to identify the man who shot him.

"The police wired to the city where the supposed husband of the woman who kept the house had gone a few weeks before, but it was said he had left for a neighboring city; but the police in that city could not find him there.

"A few days afterward he was arrested in a city on the Missouri River and in his grip was found a knit jacket, a slouch hat, and a pistol with one empty shell of the exact size of the bullet found in the body of the dead man.

"He was indicted and I prosecuted the case personally.

"His attorney defended on the ground of an alibi, but he was convicted and sentenced to be hanged.

"During the trial it developed that he had never been legally married to the woman who was

supposed to be his wife, and she was permitted to testify against him, and among other things, she told of their early love affair and how she had contracted the 'black plague,' and how that had tied her to him.

"His attorneys filed a request for a trial on 'insanity after conviction' and a jury was impaneled for this trial. On this jury was a man whom I had known for two or three years and when the jury retired to deliberate, eleven of them voted that the prisoner was sane, but this man insisted he was insane and so 'hung the jury' from agreeing on a verdict.

"A week later this juror was adjudged insane himself and at the trial, which was conducted by the County Attorney (who had charge of such cases), it developed that his marital experiences had been almost identical with those of the prisoner.

"I then got Judge Bedford to apply his psychological tests of responsibility to the prisoner and the next jury adjudged him insane.

"The most mysterious, complicated and interesting of these murder trials was a poison case.

"A wealthy widow was traveling in the west and when she arrived in Auburn some friends of

hers were holding a package addressed to her in their care. On opening the package it was found to contain an octagonal-shaped bottle of dark brown color with an inscription written on a piece of paper and pasted on the bottle which stated that the contents were whiskey.

"The woman to whom the bottle was sent was a partial paralytic and whiskey in small doses was one of her prescribed remedies, so she partook of some of the liquid that night, and died from its effect a few days afterward.

"The stuff turned out to be arsenite of potassium of two and one-half per cent strength, or enough for one teaspoonful to kill several people.

"This case was tried on purely circumstantial evidence, with witnesses from eight states.

"The defendant was convicted and sentenced to be hanged, but the Supreme Court granted a new trial on a technicality in the Court's instructions. Meantime the boy who wrote the inscription on the bottle at the behest of the defendant turned up, and, on the eve of a second trial the defendant committed suicide by taking an overdose of morphine.

"The case itself is a *causus celebre* in American trials.

"The curious sequel is that long after the death

of the defendant a prominent physician of Auburn told me that on the eve of trial he had made an examination of the defendant and he was satisfied that he was irresponsible for this act, which he admitted, for reasons similar to those given as the causes of insanity in the other cases I have related.

"Five of the other murders were committed through the influence of some real or fancied love for women and two others to get money with which to marry."

So you see, dear Uncle, how I am vindicating your theories in my diligent search for facts.

CHAPTER XVI

HELPED BY A MATCHMAKER

SEVERAL months ago I met two women who have been most valuable to my development, as well as furnishing, *en passant,* rare hours of entertainment. One is a widow of the judicial decree class, and the other is the wife of a leading physician. They are both wholly dissimilar from Mrs. Dale and from each other, while being the closest of personal friends and always refreshing and loyal friends to me.

The widow is a consummate mimic and no comic cartoon can compare with her in striking off the frailties, vanities, pecadillos, and characteristics of the leading personages of Auburn. It is all in good-natured humor and no scar could possibly ensue if each subject should witness the process. The other has the conception of friendship that it is best demonstrated by wading through a little fire frequently in the service of the one to whom her devotion attaches.

They are the ideals of the sort of pals appreciative Englishmen tell me they find so often among their women associates and which are infrequently developed in America. They are bound to appeal to the masculine temperament, in that, while they never forgot the dainty and feminine apparel and manner, they are careful to master every sport in which they undertake to join their male friends. Their attitude on this subject is evidently based on consideration, for the doctor's wife one day said: "It is deplorable that all women who enjoy playing games of sport with men do not understand the importance to both their own evolution and the added zest which they might get out of such masculine association, to master every technical phase of the amusements they indulge in."

Then, too, they give to my overly serious nature the exact leaven which it needs, and for days after an evening with them the musty tomes of stare decisis bristle with a humor which they seldom, in reality, possess. Not the least attractive and entertaining member of this little group is the M. D. husband of one of these ladies, whom you know, and about whom I have written you,—Dr. Haner.

The fact that he knows you has aided me to

get his assistance in acquiring quite a store of accurate, scientific information concerning various phases of insanity and in placing a more discrimiating value on my psychological researches.

At this time I had begun to think that I should never be wedded to anything else than my profession.

I suppose it is true, as Young says, that women are instinctively matchmakers, and particularly married women.

Young says he has often wondered which one of several motives inspires this. Whether it is to enjoy the excitement of initiating the conquest; or whether, having attempted to navigate the matrimonial stream and found bottom rather too soon, they desire congenial company; or whether through the chastening effect of married life they have been made much more considerate of those they genuinely love and presume it will have the same effect on their friends; or whether it is that they believe the highest happiness can be found in this realm of existence and they want all their friends to know the joy of it.

It is strange how opaque brilliant women seem to be in attempting to select a suitable mate for a man.

Young says it is not opaqueness, but design;

that the woman who does the selecting desires, herself, to occupy the throne in each man's life that she is interested in and thus tries to have him permanently settled with a woman that she cannot help out-classing and out-shining.

In the case I am about to detail I am convinced there was no such motive.

The doctor's wife was most desirous that I should meet "a very clever southern girl who could not fail to interest immediately and who would be an ideal wife for a professional man."

It sounded alluring to me for I was ever alert to discover the "girl in the mists," as Mrs. Dale had described her, but I felt it was taking a long while to locate her.

But poor Young looked aghast with fright, when the suggestion was made.

"Have a heart," he almost shouted at the doctor's wife. "What has George done that he deserves to be sentenced to matrimony under any circumstances and least of all by the coquette route?"

The doctor's wife was indignant.

"What license have you to call her a coquette? She comes of a most excellent and old family and she is a beautiful and accomplished girl!" she exclaimed.

"Most accomplished in lining up a dozen gullible youths to kneel at her shrine," replied Young.

"Well, the fact that she can do this shows that she has some attractions," answered the doctor's wife.

"Do you want George to compete with these idle and professional beaux that chase after every girl who comes to town who has prospective wealth, or famed beauty, or other attractions that will take these beaux into the lime-light by going with her?" he hotly replied.

"No," she said emphatically, "not for the world. I know this young lady will appreciate a *real man* when she sees one and will, in her own way, eliminate this other bodyguard."

I courtesied for the compliment, but Young gave her an acid look and the subject was dropped.

However, a week later I was invited to the doctor's house one evening when Young was away from the city, and the other guest was the Southern girl.

At this time, besides my local attorneyship for Young's company, I was acquiring considerable general business.

She really was "a beautiful girl," and a very clever conversationalist.

As you know, I have a weakness for brown eyes in women, and here, set in a fair skin, beneath auburn hair, were most expressive brown eyes. She was of medium height, lithe and graceful in every movement.

My evening's impression of the young lady was that my friend's judgment was correct. I had great faith in the intuition of women and placed high value on their estimate of other women.

Young said, in this, I did not rightly understand cats. That they were the one being that could fool every other thing in the world, including cats. I did not at the time quite see the application.

Young did not return for several weeks. By the time he arrived I was deeply enamored of my new diversions, which consisted in seeing this young lady at least twice a week,—either as escort to dances, the theatre, or dinners, or as a guest at her home. True, she had other admirers, but apparently she was a good comrade with all of them without giving anyone a decided preference. She had such a direct and sincere way of looking and talking that I thought how unfair it was for Young, or anyone else, to intimate that she could possibly be a coquette.

Under the constant and loyal encouragement of

the doctor's wife, I found my friendship for this girl deepening every week, and it occurred to me several times that there was a great deal of truth in the old saying: "Love is a plant of slow growth." I was well aware that my tutoring on this subject had prepared me to look for a flood of feeling to overwhelm me almost immediately after meeting the "right one," but I concluded it made no difference just when the "overwhelming" came, so long as it crowned the proceeding before the final surrender.

There were times when I was convinced that the young lady cared very much for me. I gathered this from the occasional deep love look in her eyes, from the tender manner in which she would take my arm at unusual times and address me as "dearest," and from the more than cordial clasp of my hand.

In fact, my woman friend was wholly convinced that all I needed to do was to ask the question, which seemed to be invited, and the fate of us both would be sealed, and I began seriously to think about doing this. Young soon grasped the situation, but he was far too well bred to press his own views upon me. Instead, he sought to divert my mind by taking me into new social circles. All of this but intensified my desire to be

with "quite the most fascinating young lady in social life in Auburn." This latter statement is but an echo of the judgment of all the members of the set with whom she mingled.

As I look back upon the affair now, of course, I can clearly see that my feelings were kept at a high pitch through the genuinely friendly interest of the doctor's wife, who constantly detailed occurrences showing the brilliant wit or the thoughtful affection of the young lady.

There is little wonder to me now that matchmakers so often succeed with rather impossible material on one side or the other, for of all the builders of ideals that the world has produced, the matchmakers should have the wreath of triumph over every poet, musician, painter or dreamer ever wrought by the ages. The matchmakers also have the advantage over the other creators of sentiment in that after taking one to the top of the mountain and showing him the gorgeous beauties of such a life, they subtly appeal to something more powerful in human nature than ideality.

Thus, my bark was floating along in a stream which was entirely placid on the surface.

Young was certain it was headed for the cataracts of destruction. My woman friend was

equally convinced it would soon be in the calm lake of conjugal felicity.

I hope I have your entire interest, dear Uncle, in this "new affair."

CHAPTER XVII

THE ROCKS OF A NEAR-AFFAIR

FORTUNATELY, I did not have to pass final judgment, for a fate that is always most indulgent to me took this problem off my hands. I received rather a peremptory message from my woman friend one day to come to her at once.

I was very busy in the office at the time, and asked if the evening would not do. "Please drop everything and come immediately," was the telephonic answer. I took a cab and hastened to her home, with strange forebodings as to the nature of the thing that brought such an imperative message.

I feared lest it was bad news concerning you, for you were ailing at the time.

When I arrived I was shown into the drawing-room and had not long to wait. It was apparent that my friend had been weeping and as she extended her hand to me she gave vent to an audible

sob. She seated herself on the sofa and asked me to draw up a chair to face her.

"How can I ever forgive myself?" she began.

Even then I did not understand what it was all about, so I waited patiently for her to regain composure.

"You must never tell Mr. Young a word of what I shall relate"—and she paused for my reply.

"Certainly not, if you desire secrecy," I answered.

Then she bowed her head in her hands a moment.

"It is a distressing tale I must tell you; I don't think I can ever fully believe in any woman again."

I began to suspect who the personage was that she was defining and I felt my cheeks blanching.

"I must not punish you by indirect remarks. This is what happened," she said.

"I was calling on Mrs. Courtier this afternoon" (the mother of the Southern girl) "and as I was leaving I overheard a conversation which you should know instantly and thus my impatient message for you to call. Mrs. Courtier and I had been visiting in the drawing-room, where I bade her adieu, and, as I stepped into the recep-

tion hall, I heard from the half-open door of the music-room Darcy Courtier and Will Medley and Tom Smithson, two of her ardent admirers, relating this climax to what must have been a vivid scene:

" 'And so you have set the date of your wedding to Will for the first week in June,' exclaimed Tom. 'I had your promise for October,' he half sobbed, 'and always when I called you wore the engagement ring which I gave you,' he added in tones of astonishment.

" 'Yes—and when I called you had the ring which I presented to you on your engagement finger,' sternly said Will.

" 'You Northern men don't understand women at all,' she plaintively replied.

" 'Evidently not,' acridly replied Will. Then with a tone of apology he added:

" 'Perhaps I should not have done it but in my enthusiasm at your fixing our wedding date, when I called last night, I told Tom all about it this morning and naturally when he found his voice, he told me of his own engagement.'

"I could not hear more without eavesdropping, so I hurried out the front door. There were feminine sobs and protestations of loyalty and devotion with an impatient but gentle 'Pshaw! all

this is miserable business, and is not our ideal of honor by any means, nor the ideal of any Southern man or woman I have ever known. Where in the world did you get your standard in such matters?' from Will."

My friend paused and I began to study the ceiling. I saw Young's cynical smile reflected from every section of that portion of the room's architecture. Presently my friend said, "I don't know how much of this will sift out, but I imagine very little, for the young men are fine characters and they will say nothing, and, of course, the young lady is not apt to publish the proceedings."

I made no reply, but arising I thanked her with the cordial gratefulness which I felt, and took my departure.

I saw Young wearing a diabolical grin at every street corner and in almost every passer-by, as I walked the two miles to our home. I also found him there in the flesh and he was more than gracious this evening. I half suspected he knew what had happened—but this was my whimsical fancy, for, of course, he knew nothing.

He soon discovered my mood, however, and used all his diplomacy to ascertain the cause, but to no avail. The reason for his own graciousness soon developed.

CHAPTER XVIII

"A FINE PURPOSE MAKES A FINE GIRL"

THE Dales had wired that they would be in Auburn in two days for a month's visit and outing in the mountains.

Fate, again, was kind to me, for an understanding woman friend is the best panacea the old world affords for lacerated feelings.

I told Mrs. Dale of my experiences and she gave abundantly of her sympathy and advice.

"It is all controlled by early environment," she said, in discussing the ideals of these women.

"You know," she added, "a great religious order says that if it can have sole control of the child for the first twelve years of its life it cares not who may have the child after that, for the imprints of the religious training will be so indelible then that nothing and no person can eradicate them. So it is with all phases of life. The ideals of childhood, the scale of moral values then

ascertained and fixed, the dreams that are sprouted or the vileness that is engendered, control all after life. Really,—if you will take the time to investigate, you will find that the destiny of every individual is fixed for good or for evil during that period. It is not always the family influence that is the strongest in shaping lives, either, but the *dominating environment* is the thing of greatest importance for parents and others to ascertain and consider in dealing with children."

Then after a moment she added: "But George, don't think for a moment you can find a congenial mate among idle butterflies. The influences that try to hatch this sort of human caterpillar are not those that can produce therefrom either beauty of person or grace of soul. The girl with a fine purpose in life, if her early environment has given her high ideals and clean thoughts, is the only worth-while product of the feminine genus."

Young was present once when Mrs. Dale was thus impersonally giving vent to her opinions. He greatly wondered at the sudden manner in which I had quit calling on Miss Courtier, but I had partially appeased his curiosity by telling him she was engaged. Still there was a mystery about it that baffled him. He was convinced, in his own way,

that she was a coquette, and he loved to dig at me over her shoulder.

"How many of these worth-while feminine specimens do you find in any of our cities, outside the cemeteries where the legends on tombstones make one believe that such gracious creatures at one time existed?" he cynically asked.

"In these days," Mrs. Dale replied, "your worth-while woman is a busy woman and you will find her in great numbers on the stage and in offices and factories and stores and hospitals. More and more the active brain which directs the skilled hand is getting so-called 'social recognition' and it will not be long until approved social functions will be dominated by ideals and mental inspiration instead of by the vulgar display of lurid gowns and the inane chatter that characterize most of them now."

"You may be right," he said resignedly. "The feminine millenium may be at hand, but I am glad I shall not be around and compelled to put any trust in its saintly appearance. The most of women are natural coquettes and it is just as impossible to make a perfect lady at all times out of a coquette as it is to make a perfect gentleman at all times out of an inveterate smoker. The per-

fect lady and the perfect gentleman must always consider the rights, comfort and happiness of other people, and a coquette can no more stop putting her wiles over on gullible men than the tobacco slave can help puffing smoke into the faces of defenseless people in public places where the law does not prohibit such performances."

We laughed at his similies, but I noticed he emphasized the coquette portion particularly to me.

On the two weeks' camping and fishing trip which we took with the Dales into the heart of the Rockies I had ample opportunity to get her views on several more or less important ambitions. I found myself rather naturally going to her for advice, in person when I could, by letter when we were separated. This has always been a mystery to me, for, as you know, I have the most indulgent mother in the world and one who delights to have my every confidence and to give freely of her counsel, but since meeting Mrs. Dale I have the feeling that she understands me better than does my own mother. My mother and sister have visited me several times since I have lived in Auburn and our letters have been interchanged twice a week with all the cordiality and genuine love which always attach to our relations. I told

them of my achievements and of my hopes and received enthusiastic praise for what I had accomplished and all possible encouragement for the future. But when I need advice I go to Mrs. Dale for it.

Do you understand this? I do not, but I imagine it is this way:

Besides the secret springs of human affection which ever work mystic results, I think some of this comes from the feeling that my professional ambition is somewhat more vaulting than I desire my own family to know about, whereas Mrs. Dale constantly encourages and inspires me to attempt the biggest possible, honorable career.

You are always deeply interested in everything I do and always cheer me on with letters that carry very much of your own hypnotic personality. But after your letter to me at my graduation you have given me little advice and never any criticism, and I know full well that your motive is to make me act on my own responsibility.

During the time the Dales were here, the final arrangements were perfected for the removal of both Young and myself to New York City.

While I have acquired a very lucrative general practice, I have specialized in mining law in all its phases, including a thorough study of the statutes

and regulations of the foreign countries where Mr. Young's company does business. He has earned the confidence of his employers to the extent that they offered him the responsible and remunerative position of Chief Engineer, with headquarters in New York City. He insisted that he must name his own General Counsel, for the relations were so important and intimate and the duties so interdependent that he would not risk his hard-earned reputation in possible conflict with a hostile or non-understanding legal department.

Some time ago I was assigned to some difficult work in Alaska and I succeeded far beyond my own expectations and to the commending delight of the head officials of the company. This, no doubt, was a great aid to Young in getting his views complied with in relation to the General Counselship. In any event the two of us have received our appointments with the proviso that we are debarred from attending to any other business. The compensation offered is so very large as to make ordinary retainers for either of us look most insignificant, but we have no feeling of martyrdom to altruistic duty in accepting the terms.

I dislike to leave Auburn. I know the far West in the United States has much more within its potent petals than the inspiration derived from

fleckless skies, or empurpled mountain peaks, or picturesque foliage. It is evident that eventually the adventurous spirit which braved wild beasts and savage men to plant civilized colonies in this then trackless wilderness will stamp itself upon all generations of denizens of this region, and that as soon as the sordid ideals of the few, but powerful, are overthrown, every resident, whether cowboy, or miner, or tenderfoot, or professional man, or merchant, will stand wholly for right against wrong, for virtue against degradation, for the good principle against the bad, in all important affairs of life, and for their country and flag in every national emergency.

Maybe this is too preachy, but I dislike to leave the West for the even more mercenary spirit of New York.

CHAPTER XIX

SOME AMERICAN IDEALS

I CANNOT separate myself entirely from Auburn without giving vent to some of my pent-up feelings about the blighting condition that destroys so much of the beauty of life. I know the hopelessness of it, but, yet . . . I have found there are so many "yets" in life.

I have discovered this early in my career that at every turn of the wheel of fate we grieve at the narrow circumscription of our powers and no lesson of experience seems to be of much value in the ever new and shifting spheres of our endeavors.

In Auburn I was conscious of the advantage which I possessed over less fortunate young men in the method of my education, and in the environment of my youth, and yet—so powerful were the prevailing standards and ideals that in spite of myself I was more or less dominated by them, as

these recitals have shown. Added to the other benign influences in the West were those of nature, for like Service:

I've stood in some mighty-mouthed hollow
That's plumb-full of hush to the brim;
I've watched the big, husky sun wallow
In crimson and gold, and grow dim,
Till the moon set the pearly peaks gleaming,
And the stars tumbled out, neck and crop;
And I've thought that I surely was dreaming,
With the peace o' the world piled on top.

And yet, none of this altered the ordinary American ideal of happiness, exemplified amidst this grand panorama of nature exactly as it existed in the fetid marts of the money changers in the large cities.

The fetish of our race, "in times of piping peace," seems to be the dollar, not for any particular joy in its possession, but for the garish display which it makes possible.

For this, the sun-kissed peaks of the Rockies ran red with the blood of the murdered; for this preachers and priests and laymen sold their souls for the mess of pottage of fortunes obtained from the palsied hand of the paralyzed brain of dying

millionaires; for this, electorates were corrupted that whole communities might be exploited so millions of dollars should spring over night from the criminal myth of a utility franchise; for this, public officials were selected through political machines that were perennially maintained to *do* the people, not to *serve* them.

All of these things seem to be an inherent part of every American community that I have had opportunity to observe, but more was expected there from the impress of all that was superb and beautiful in nature, and by comparison more was produced, as I have detailed; but not enough to overbalance the craze for money. Notwithstanding these tremendous lessons of the obstacles which sordid environment and lack of ideals throw into the path of progress, we wonder at the difficulties encountered in reforming convicts whose early years were steeped in every vile and criminal influence!

And still, we expect the dainty and fragile orchid of pure love to become a product of this sort of moral soil which so generally exists in every part of our beloved country. I needed the weapons of every sort of dragon killer to make an appreciable impression of your teachings. Through some power greater than my own will I

did preserve my standards of moral values and I have kept both body and soul clean and wholesome.

I was fully prepared to find all these influences controlling every avenue of thought and action in New York City, and, as usually happens with prejudgments, I was doomed to a revision of my conclusions. The superficial opinion of the casual visitor to New York City seems to be that the whole population partakes of the characteristics of the parasites who cater to public wants in hotel and theatre and conveyance, or of the grasping and thoroughly mercenary operations in speculative and investing circles.

Nowhere are the lessons which you taught concerning early environment so markedly demonstrated as they are in New York City.

Such a vast number of these denizens were born and reared elsewhere and came to this city after their habits and thoughts became settled that they move in their own congenial circles quite undisturbed by any antagonistic influences.

We have taken up our residence on Washington Square, where we hired the house of an aristocratic family of the Civil War days and have made it over to fit our own tastes and desires.

We both found absorbing duties awaiting us

here and the first months of our operations will find us much of the time away from the city, for we must go to South America, Alaska and India.

You will thus be spared the affliction of my letters for a long time.

CHAPTER XX

MY SEARCH CONTINUES

I HOPE you have not entirely forgotten that my letters are not yet completed. It looks now as though they never would be finished.

I thought perhaps the climax had come here since our return from India, but I was mistaken.

I had been greatly impressed with Mrs. Dale's advice to look for the worth-while girl among the bee-hives of feminine industry rather than among the lolling sweet-meat eaters, and so I naturally drifted into an active friendship with Anne Drew, an ambitious and beautiful young actress, whom we met some months ago.

In her I found a flat contradiction to every old theory concerning the women of the stage. She really is more beautiful without make-up, she is more fascinating in private conversation than in the rôle of the actress and her private life is above and beyond reproach.

When I witness her effect upon Young I am convinced that her art is much greater in the drawing room than in the most effective of her stage scenes.

Here, at last, Young looked with approving eyes upon my attentions to a single female, and I am positive the reason was that he thought she was not of the marrying kind. I have sometimes charged him with looking with envious eyes on my attentions to her, and also with being a more skilful match-maker than was the doctor's wife in Auburn. He certainly has done his best to have her with us on every possible occasion. It is a rare treat to listen to her pungent puncturing of his cynicism and I think he secretly admires her for her discriminating understanding of his various moods.

Life has sped along rosy paths during our weeks here. I have had some very "near affairs," which might have brought serious consequences, but thanks to the wisdom of your teachings of faith, and Young's alert eye of distrust, on the woman question, I have probably just missed two or three pitfalls, for they are plentiful here and most alluring in their innocence of appearance.

To relate the details would not entertain you, and since I have safely passed all danger signals

I will content myself with telling you the result.

But we are off for Texas to-morrow and it is scarcely possible that I shall find anything there worth writing to you about.

Our quest is for oil and there is not apt to be any very thrilling romance connected with that elusive and volatile substance.

CHAPTER XXI

A SIGNIFICANT LETTER

Dallas, Texas, May 31, 1913.

DEAR UNCLE:—I am leaving here to-morrow morning, to join Young in New York, from which port we sail on June 5th, to go abroad on an extended trip.

I am mailing you several letters together, written as I have found time to indite them. It may be that they tell of the approach to the climax of my story, for which you have so patiently waited.

I have numbered the letters without any other designation. Forgive me for quoting so much poetry in them, but I simply cannot think in prose just now.

Affectionately your nephew,

GEORGE BURNETT.

CHAPTER XXII

A GIRL FROM THE MISTS

No. 1.

"WAXAHACHIE!" shouted the Pullman car porter to us as we entered the environs of a little Texas city set in dazzling green and white.

It was after five o'clock in the afternoon of a day in May, but this Southland was redolent of the products of mid-summer in the North. Gorgeous flowers were in bloom in every yard and on trellis and house-wall variegated roses clustered in profusion.

The gentleman who was to take us into the prospective oil fields the next day, Mr. Daniel Percy, met us as we alighted from the train.

We were soon in his large automobile and spinning along the country road toward his farm, which was some six or seven miles from Waxahachie.

I have been in some of the most beautiful farm-

ing countries in America and in Europe, but I know none anywhere of the rich and colorful setting which characterizes this section of Texas.

As we approached Mr. Percy's home, a large, three-storied, white colonial house, set amidst tropical plants and roses of a dozen hues, the sun was just approaching the horizon, and as it passed into a cluster of clouds a radiant picture was produced impossible to equal anywhere except in the far East.

Just as Young exclaimed "Bombay!" to me, the faint outline of the new moon appeared and from the open doorways and windows of the house floated the notes from piano and voice of a Parsee hymn of sun worship.

Young and I looked at each other in dazed astonishment, and, as we came near enough to distinguish the tones, I could restrain myself no longer.

"Mr. Percy!" I exclaimed, "please tell me where we are. Is this really Texas, or is it India? That voice and that song I heard a year ago in Bombay under exactly similar planetary conditions; the same sunset; the same new moon; the voice issuing from a house set amidst the same sort of foliage, which we were passing on our way to the Parsee religious services on the beach; the

whole thing has haunted me ever since; the beauty —the devotion—the sentiment of it all has thrilled my soul at every remembrance of the event. What does it mean and who is the singer?"

Young showed that he shared my curiosity, if not my sentiment. Mr. Percy looked grave. "Please don't lose anything of either this panorama or the music. I will answer your question in a moment."

We had stopped in the roadway leading to the house, where we had an unobstructed view of the sunset and where we could catch the words of the song.

The singer was just completing the first stanza of the two comprising the hymn and this portion was a joyous, rapturous apotheosis of the departing sun. Just as the sun disappeared and cast its ever paler light of a first after-glow there stole over me the awful depression of the far East immediately after sunset, and again, as at Bombay, came the tones and music of sadness and despair at the departure of the natural light of the world, which constitute the second stanza of this weird and wonderful song. She sang in the native language and her voice was of a rich, deep, melodious soprano.

I wondered if, as at Bombay, the love song, the

words of which we could not distinguish then, would follow. We had not long to wait, for almost immediately from the singer and musical instrument came the tones accompanied by English words.

"The Fire Worshippers, from Lalla Rookh," —I said, *sotto voce,* to Young.

Mr. Percy heard me and quietly replied, "Slightly changed and set by her to the air of a very old Parsee love song."

The illumination in the west was deepening in color with the wonderful second after-glow of this region, and a great golden flood of atmosphere filled the valley just beyond us.

The voice from the house was highly cultivated and perfectly trained and carried every varying expression. Just now it was intense as these words reached our ears:

"On some calm, blessed shore we'll dwell,
Where 'tis no crime to love too well;
Where thus to worship tenderly
An erring child of light like thee
Will not be sin,—or, if it be,
Where we may weep our faults away,
Together kneeling, night and day,
Thou, for *my* sake, at Jesus' shrine
And I—at *any* god's for thine."

The deep orange hue in the valley was gradually diminishing as the song ceased and again was the effect of the far East felt in the dreamy composure of the soul.

I turned to Mr. Percy inquiringly for an answer to my question.

"You probably heard the same songs in Bombay, and from the same person, for that is where my niece was born and where she lives most of the time with her father, who is the American representative in India of the Sterling Oil Company.

"Her mother died when she was quite young and her constant companion from childhood has been a cultured Parsee lady, who belongs to one of the best families there and who is now associated with my niece in translating into English some old and interesting Parsee manuscripts and in supervising the large Conservatory of Music in Bombay.

"My niece is devoted to the Parsee people and her own character has developed almost wholly along the lines of their religious and moral teachings. While she is a devout Christian, I am certain that Christ to her is the Ormuzd, or Parsee personification of the good principle of life. As you know, the Parsees are the one religious sect of the world who live up to their ideals and moral

principles, probably better than any other people, and their teachings and rules of conduct could be copied, with profit, by the entire world, for they have no tenets of religion or morals that are not perfectly rational.

"In any event, I feel confident that you will agree with me that my niece, Ina Vive, her name is Ina Vive Constant, reflects credit upon the persons or surroundings responsible for her development. You must meet Mrs. Percy and both of these other ladies," he said, as he directed the chauffeur to proceed.

We found Mrs. Percy alone in the large living room and just as I was becoming fascinated with her pure and consistent southern accent the Parsee lady appeared and we were presented to her. She showed her breeding and blood in every word and act. She was typical of the very highest class of these remarkable women who are so superior and different in every way from any other oriental females.

Presently Mr. Percy excused himself and I heard him among the rose bushes calling "Ina Vive! Ina Vive!" and the answer "Yes, Uncle, dear," and "Come here! I have some friends who heard you singing the Sun Song in Bombay last year. They want to meet you." And as she

joined him I heard her protest against being introduced to strangers.

"But I have told them how proud I am of you and don't think I shall let you hide your beauty and talent under a bushel"—he laughingly said to her.

So in they came, his arm partially encircling her waist.

And thus it is, dear Uncle, that yesterday my record for you reached its acme. Not only have I met 'the one woman without whom life seems impossible,' which you suggest is the final test of love, but I have found a rare and beautiful spirit that instantly flooded my soul with a new understanding of life and its vast spiritual treasures. I may never have the supreme privilege and honor of calling her 'wife,' but the mere act of meeting her has completely obliterated all that has thus far occurred in my life concerning love, in theory and in reality, and existence to me hereafter cannot fail to be sweeter, deeper, more satisfying and nobler.

As she undoubtedly complements my own being or I should not be overwhelmed by her, perhaps there may be a measure of self-glorification in any tribute I may pay her, except for the consideration that to supply the qualities which I lack she needed

to and does possess priceless ones which I do not, but which I, better than almost any one else, can fully appreciate.

And is this not what individual love, through natural selection, is?

The preacher said to the deacon: "If every man felt as I do, every man would want my wife." And the deacon promptly replied: "If every man felt as I do nobody on earth would have her."

As her uncle presented me to her that evening she appeared to me to radiate dignity, strength, poise, sympathy, understanding and spiritual dominance. She had those large, marvelous, dark brown eyes, which entice to repeated inspections of their depth, but which constantly seem more fathomless. She had the slender hand, the tapering fingers, the small, high-arched foot, the low-arched forehead, the even, white teeth, the small mouth with dainty curve to its line, the slender but graceful and well-nourished and lithe and active figure, all of which carry the characteristics of an artistic nature, supplemented with well-proportioned physical, spiritual and mental growth. Add to this a colorful olive complexion, black hair, a height of five feet six inches, a melodious voice that Nature intoned to gentleness, and it presents an accurate likeness of Ina Vive Constant as she is at

twenty-three years of age. *I* might be accused of undue partiality, but that accusation could never be attributed to Young. After dinner he and I went for a stroll through the spacious grounds. When we had reached a settee far removed from the house he indicated his wish to talk with me and as we seated ourselves he affectionately placed his arm around my shoulders.

"Well, old man, I have lost you forever this time. Wasn't it General Phil Sheridan who said that there really wasn't much choice between Texas and hell? I never understood his comparison until this trip. Satan certainly turned loose on us here, to-night, and you are doomed to the fiery furnace of matrimony, unless she is utterly deaf to the entreaties which I know you will make. I fervently hope she is another Miss Drew and so wrapped up in her work that nothing outside counts."

"Please, Young, please," I replied. "None of these things fit this time."

"That is what I know all too well," he sadly replied.

We were silent for a few minutes and then he said:

"George, she is the Madonna of the Olives among women. Don't you recall how the trans-

cendent spirituality of that painting makes you forget all else?

"Many women emphasize in their looks the food they eat, or the clothing they wear, or the manner of man they admire. It is impossible to imagine that food is at all necessary to this girl, or that she could ever be common enough to be coquettish, or vulgar enough to be at all indiscriminate in her association with men. I wish I had known women better when I was a young man," and he gave a genuine sigh. I thanked him for his generous analysis, but I was dying to be alone and he knew it.

"I am frightfully tired," he said. "I think I'll turn in," and he arose to go.

As we parted for the night I gave his hand a double pressure, for I appreciate the friendship of this man more than I have ever been able to express.

When I arrived in my own bed-chamber I dimmed the lights and sat down by the window where I could see the myriad of stars which this clear atmosphere displayed.

I thought much of what Young had just said about Barabino's Madonna of the Olives, as I recalled the painting hung in Genoa. The artist had really caught the subtle inspiration which the

virgin narrative contains, and what surprised me most, was that Young had caught the potent spiritual influence so manifest in both this girl and the painting.

The girl was in reality:

> Light as the angel shapes that bless
> An infant's dream, yet not the less
> Rich in all woman's loveliness;
> And filled with all youth's sweet desires,
> Mingling the meek and vestal fires,
> Of other worlds with all the bliss,
> The fond, weak tenderness of this.

And—

"It was not that beauty of form and face which dazzles us at the first sight of a lovely maiden, and then fades away as suddenly as a blossom in Spring. It was much more the harmony of her whole being, the reality of every emotion, the spirituality of expression, the perfect union of body and soul which blesses him so who looks upon it."

As I meditated, the setting of a few hours before miraged in the starlight. I don't know why (except that the mystic has a way of correlating

persons and events which is quite its own), but I saw Napoleon standing in front of his army tent a few hours before Waterloo and exclaiming to the night filled with rain and blackness and foreboding: "We are in accord." I saw the tall, gaunt figure and the tragic face of Lincoln at Gettysburg casting his deep-set eyes far into the world of mystery and uttering immortal oracles concerning the aspirations of the unfettered soul.

I saw one of the greatest of American judges arriving at his unerring conclusions through the processes of psychology, and one of the most skilful of criminal lawyers perfectly protecting his clients through some sort of mesmerism. I saw my Grand Army friend, who fought under Grant at Vicksburg and afterward from "The Wilderness" to Petersburg, dominating, through his strong, sincere, religious nature, all who came in contact with him. I recalled several mothers whose wand of authority was their steady, all-pervading character. And then I remembered that I could never recall that I had ever visualized any of these personages in any particular clothing, or as the product of foods or any other material thing. In fact, I never knew of any person who had done so. They were there as a part of the sympathetic system of the world which instinctively

comprehends all the tragedies and joys of human life, and in *their* realms of influence they transcended in thought and action all the dross of ordinary human motive.

It was evident that Ina Vive Constant belonged in this circle, and, in the realm of her love, there could not possibly be anything frivolous or trifling. The man who won her devotion must arouse and captivate the very foundation sentiments of pure and superior womanhood.

When I came out of these reveries, for I was just beginning to learn that love itself beats against every shore of the ocean of mysticism, dawn was dimly breaking in the east. I had no desire to sleep, so I went outdoors and walked for miles along the country road, paying my own tribute to the rising sun. I returned before the household was much astir and my absence was not noted.

CHAPTER XXIII

IT IS GENUINE LOVE

No. 2.

THERE was no service I could render by joining Young in an inspection of the oil fields, for my duties were to examine and perfect the titles after Young had favorably passed upon the desirability of the properties.

Young makes many trips of inspection, in which some lawyer in my office other than myself accompanies him, and I only leave New York when the properties are of great value or there are intricacies of title, or at the earnest solicitation of Young for my personal company, the latter generally happening when he is going into new or particularly interesting fields. I am always glad to avail myself of these opportunities to see new parts of the world, for I appreciate the educational and broadening influence of travel.

So Young went to the oil field with Mr. Percy and I remained at the farm.

Miss Constant had an excellent automobile of her own, which she drove herself, and she, the Parsee lady, and myself, almost lived in the car during the four days of Young's absence.

It did not require words for me to know that I was congenial company to her, for every look and act conveyed such information. Beyond that all was mystery and doubt. She spoke often of her life in India and her ambition to translate as much as possible of the wonderful literature of the Parsees, buried often in fragmentary manuscripts scattered among families whose ancestors had come from Persia to India to avoid captivity by the Mohammedan conquerers of their own country.

She was vivacious, gay in manner and speech in her lighter conversation, with a fine sense of humor about everything but the natural defects of people, which she insisted were their interesting characteristics and in reality constituted their individuality and beauty, if properly studied.

By nature she was deeply religious. Not deeply bigoted, or wedded to any creed, or form of worship, but a living, active soul which ever saw—

Sermons in stones and good in everything,

together with the full tragedy of the blighted lives which early environment had started along the "bad principle," or the "descending line" of life.

She possessed all the enthusiasm for Zarathustra (Zoroaster) and his teachings that characterizes every student of the life and writings of that immortal Persian sage, but she had no difficulty in fitting his philosophies into the essentials of Christianity.

The one part of the Parsee religion which appealed to her most powerfully was the worship of God through tribute to His wonderful handiwork, and sunset and sunrise always found her in devotional prayer, and wherever possible, under the unsheltered dome of the skies.

She was fond of quoting Byron to me on this subject:

Not vainly did the early Persian make
His altar the high places and the peak
Of earth—o'ergazing mountains, and thus take
A fit and unwalled temple, where to seek
The spirit, in whose honor shrines are weak,
Upreared of human hands. Come, and compare
Columns and idol-dwellings, Goth or Greek,
With nature's realms of worship, earth and air,
Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy prayer.

These deeper wells of her nature were only found when the circumstances produced the serious moods, or when the hours of devotion came. At other times she was in light-hearted accord with the spirit of the moment.

It is useless to attempt to reproduce much of my conversational efforts to explore her thoughts and feelings on the subject of love.

Empty, idle, fawning or flattering love chatter would have been instantly fatal to him who attempted it. I realized that if she ever loved at all that fact would be buried in the deep recesses of her soul until her nature was overwhelmed with conviction concerning both the capability for, and the genuineness of, the proffered devotion.

It did not require any speculation on her part to determine my own sentiments, for they were expressed in every act.

On one of our trips, when the Parsee lady for the moment was not with us, I ventured to ask her about the love song from Lalla Rookh which she so often sang.

"Do you like it?" she replied.

"Very much. But what led you into setting these particular words to music?"

"Do you think they refer to any real persons?" she lightly and smilingly asked.

"They easily might," I replied. "I can never read the Fire Worshippers without the vague feeling that the poem expresses a personal sentiment toward an indefinite someone."

She looked at me in wonderment and I know it was on her tongue to agree with me, but her expression suddenly changed, and with a mischievous light in her eyes she replied:

"Perhaps some living Hafed exists out in India, to whom I desire to pay this homage. You know there are many fine young men there."

I knew she did not mean it and that she intended that I should know this fact. Nevertheless, her words struck deeply into my soul and for the first time I began to realize how necessary she was to my contented existence. I tried to return the gay smile, but it must have been a blighted effort.

She, apparently, understood every thought in my mind, and that no disturbance, even, of my equanimity might exist, she said:

"The life without ideals must be a dreary life. I idealize everything connected with the 'good principle' of life, and certainly the theme of this song is connected with that principle. It expresses the deepest dream of my nature and Hinda and Hafed are floating visions which I hope to bring into the reality of my own life some day."

She immediately changed the subject by calling my attention to a particularly gorgeous collection of roses in the garden of the house at which we were stopping.

The days sped on. Young completed his work and I finished with the titles, but I could not bring myself to the conclusion that I ought to return immediately to New York.

Young and I are to leave America early in June for Spitzbergen to take over the large coal mine on that island, and, it being in "No Man's Land," there promises to be many fine points of law to adjust with the Norwegian Government, which exercises a protectorate over the territory. Then we are to go into the Balkan States on business and thence to India again. Gladly would I cancel this service could I devise any way of doing so, but it has been long planned and is of great importance to our company.

I had spoken of this trip to our Southern friends and caught the shade of concern and regret that flitted across Miss Constant's countenance.

"How I wish I could be in Bombay to welcome you!" she exclaimed.

"But my father does not return for a year," she added.

I indicated enough of my desire to remain

longer in Texas to cause Mrs. Percy to urge me to join them in a motor trip to San Antonio and a visit to her sister there, which trip they expected to take in a few days.

Much to the disgust of Young, I accepted the invitation, and he immediately prepared to return to New York, for, although he was also cordially invited to join us, I knew he was impatient to get back to his duties, which were the real source of all his joy.

I accompanied him to Waxahachie the evening he left, and knowing he wanted to talk privately to me, I drove the car myself.

"Lost! Lost! Lost!" he said with all the assumed sadness he could command, when we were fairly on the highway.

"Found! you mean," I rather shouted in return.

"Well, one thing is certain, George, she is the sort of woman whose love is not determined by the size of the box of candy, or the cost of the flowers, or your commercial rating. This is the uncanny part of it. One knows how to gauge the love founded on the report of Dun or Bradstreet, but just what this sort of woman is driving at is an enigma." He assumed his accustomed cynical air, but I knew he was not speculating for one

moment about her or her motives. So I gave him the impatient look with which he was familiar when I wanted to tell him without words that he was talking buncombe. He smiled cordially and gave his cigar a more meditative grip in his teeth. As he shook my hand in adieu, at the car platform, he reached into his pocket and produced a calendar of the month of June in a neat leather frame on which was marked in red ink across 5,—"Our sailing date. 10 A. M." And across the 2—"Latest day you can leave Texas."

He remarked as he handed it to me: "If by any possibility you can remember to look at this we shall not miss our boat," and he chuckled at my evident embarrassment as he disappeared in the Pullman car.

CHAPTER XXIV

A RUINED TEMPLE AND NEW-BORN LOVE

No. 3.

I ENJOYED the hospitality of San Antonio people for four days. As a matter of course my interest in Miss Constant received its share of gossip, and both of us were of decided interest on that account, for the glorious Southland sees romance in every evidence of admiration, outside the usual attentions, of a man for a woman. I was intensely interested in the Alamo and the vivid impression it gave of its own thrilling history, but there was something about the San Jose Mission that captivated my soul. It may have been its exquisite architecture, seen yet in its jagged ruins, or its wonderfully artistic window setting, or its tower which afforded such a splendid view of the city and the surrounding country. But aside from all these things I felt certain its walls could tell, if they could speak, of great sacrifice made in devotion to the Christ or the Virgin.

I motored out there twice alone during my stay in San Antonio to try to catch the meaning of the mystery with which it was shrouded, but I failed utterly to glean anything from my observation. So this last night of my stay I had resolved to visit it at midnight, when peace embraced the world, to ascertain if the spirits of the devout would not then impart something of their experiences. I stole from the house after everyone else was asleep, and, going to a garage, I hired a small automobile and was soon near the Mission. I did not wish to attract the attention of any passer-by, so I left my car about a block away, in front of the small house of a Mexican gardener. I went through the main chamber, then the Sacristy, then the small rooms where services are now held, and, catching much of the spirit of the place and the hour, I thought the tower would complete the revelation, and I climbed into it over the rather frail ladders and steps that lead there. Propping myself against a solid part of the wall, with one foot and leaning far over one of the open sides of the tower, I fell into a dreamy reverie of my surroundings. The old place really seemed to speak to me. As I was intently trying to catch every echo from the expressive spirit of the past I suddenly heard from below the soft tones of a

female prayer. At first I surmised my fancy was altogether too alert,—but as the voice grew more distinct I thought a Mexican woman had sought the Blessed Virgin in some midnight sorrow. I peered through the crevices and finally I saw a lighted taper near the spot where the old altar had stood. Then I caught the form of a woman kneeling in prayer. The words became more audible until I knew they were in English and they grew in distinctness until I could hear each one. I nearly lost my foothold in the narrow passageway as I recognized the voice of Miss Constant.

She was closing her Christian prayer:

"And if the great love of strong and undefiled manhood is for me, make me worthy to comprehend and appreciate it."

I gasped with choked feelings of delight and wonderment, for while it seemed to refer to my own devoted importunities, it might be that indefinable ideal which seemed to possess her.

This Christian prayer was followed with another; this time a Parsee prayer in English, a copy of which I afterward obtained from her:

Hail! gracious Ormuzd, author of all good,
Spirit of beauty, purity, and light;
Teach me like thee to hate dark deeds of night,

And battle ever with the hellish brood
Of Ahriman, dread prince of evil mood—
Father of lies, uncleanness, envious spite,
Thefts, murders, sensual sins that shun the light,
Unreason, ugliness and fancies lewd—
Grant me, bright Ormuzd, in thy ranks to stand,
A valiant soldier faithful to the end;
So when I leave this life's familiar strand,
Bound for the great Unknown, shall I commend
My soul, if soul survive, into thy hand—
Fearless of fate if thou thine aid will lend.

This ended, she arose, took the taper and was starting for the entrance when I called to her:

"Miss Constant! Miss Constant! This is George Burnett! Wait a moment please." For a second only were her nerves disturbed. Then as I rapidly came into view—"Why this functioning of the Owl?" in tones of laughter greeted me.

Her manner placed me at ease in what naturally might have been a trying situation.

I replied: "I came to get my last inspiration from this mystic temple. I had always been certain that rare spirits spoke from its depths, and now I have the proof."

I looked at her rather keenly and directly. She met my gaze with a steady return one and her eyes

seemed to reflect the whole world of spiritual thought.

"I came here from custom,—for always when I am in San Antonio I come here at midnight," she said simply.

The same thought that controlled me in leaving my machine at a distance had evidently influenced her, also, for hers, she told me, was in front of another gardener's house farther away than mine was. She had wondered at the strange car, but concluded it belonged to some physician who might be visiting a Mexican family in the settlement.

While we stood near the outside entrance to the sanctuary, she with the taper lighting her glorious eyes and countenance,—I stepped in front of her and close to her.

"Ina Vive"—I said, as she started at that name from me—"Ina Vive, I love you with all my being. Purely, wholly, completely love you and I know what genuine love should be and is."

I had before this told her briefly of your guidance of my life and your theories.

She cast her eyes to the floor, but said nothing.

"Please give me my answer before I go on this trip, which may separate us forever," I replied.

She raised her head. Tears had sprung to her eyes.

"Please don't speak that way, for we shall soon meet again, I am sure."

"But tell me *now* your feelings," I urged.

"How do you know I am worthy of your great love? I am a simple child of nature, with no thought other than filling some small, useful mission in life and living in all ways according to the 'good principle,' as the Parsees call it. Wait. Let me understand myself and you. It will all come to us just what to do while you are gone, as all desirable things come through meditation and prayer. I may be merely a Bombay illusion to you, which you have idealized after meeting the owner of the voice you heard in the foliage."

"No," I answered emphatically—"it is the embodied spirit of *you* that I adore, not the illusory voice of Bombay."

She looked at me doubtingly,—as though it were impossible for anyone to adore *her*.

"Please"— I implored—"please answer me now."

She hesitated and I moved nearer and started to embrace her.

She put her hand out and gently pushed me away.

"Not to-night," she said firmly.

Then, after a moment's hesitation, she said:

"Please time your arrival at Bombay so as to land in the first of the new moon. Go that evening to the rites on the beach, as you did last year, and when those services are finished go to the house in the foliage, where you heard the song, and there you will find the Parsee lady and my answer. God bless you on your trip and bring you safely home. Please, now, Mr. Burnett, never mention this subject again until you get your answer in Bombay. Write me, of course, and I will write you, if you will be good enough to give me your mailing address. Please take me home now."

She took my arm and I escorted her to her automobile and drove her home in that car, sending an attendant of the garage for the other one.

I gave her a card of my itinerary and that night I bade her adieu, for my train left very early the next morning.

I came to Dallas and spent a day closing some business for our firm. From here I shall go to Washington to visit a few hours with the Dales and I shall stop at Philadelphia to see you and then go to bid my mother and sister adieu. Not one word concerning Ina Vive Constant shall I lisp to any of these persons aside from yourself. She is either the rarest treasure possible for my

soul to possess, or I am doomed to the most profound grief my life has ever known, and I cannot discuss such an impending fate with them until I know more of its significance myself.

CHAPTER XXV

PARADISE OR PERDITION?

Cairo, Egypt, October 12, 1913.

MY DEAR UNCLE:—It is now four months since I bade Ina Vive Constant farewell on that eventful night in San Antonio.

I am fearful that it was a final farewell.

I did not think so for three months after leaving her, because there was a letter from her at every port of arrival. A fine, cheery, friendly letter. Love was never referred to, but often I detected a note of loneliness and expressions of longing to see me again. She wrote me of all her comings and goings,—what she had read,—what opera she had heard,—what new play she had attended,—what new dreams she had woven.

I was surprised to receive the last of these letters of hers from San Francisco, where she said she had gone with her father on one of his business trips. She wrote of having met some dear Bom-

bay friends there, one in particular, to whom she referred was a young man whose life and character might well have fitted him to live the part of Hafed in the Fire Worshippers of Lalla Rookh.

Since then,—I have not heard one word from her or about her. I am in Cairo as I write this and I have had no letter in four weeks, and it is still two weeks before I am due in Bombay.

I dare not tell any of this to Young, for I have not told him anything concerning my Bombay arrangements. This secretiveness has been partly through a superstitious fear of evil if I discuss her at all and partly because I dread any expression of the remotest cynicism concerning her. And yet I am dreadfully worried and sick at heart.

I have implored Young to abandon the trip and return to America, but this he has attributed to my "love mania," as he calls it, and I think he is rather pleased at my suffering, reasoning, no doubt, that I will all too soon find out that no woman is worth so much thought or devotion.

* * * * * *

FOUR DAYS LATER

This is written on the eve of our departure for Bombay and I am feeling much better than when I wrote the preceding paragraphs. I still have

had no word from her, but I have faith *in* her. Either her letters have gone astray, or she is ill and cannot write, or she is putting me to some sort of test. I have written to her just as regularly as though I had her weekly message. I have met some interesting people who are traveling on the boat which we are to take to Bombay and I am looking forward with both gladness and sadness to the trip.

Gladness to be nearer my ultimate fate—whatever it may be. Sadness lest tragedy instead of joy awaits me.

I shall write no more until I know what Bombay has to offer to the future of my life.

I cannot think consistently, so why try to write entertainingly or instructively.

I shall put my mind and my soul in cold storage during the trip and shall patiently await what will be either the consummation of all my fairest fancies or the realization of all my direst forebodings.

Bombay may be Paradise.

I feel it will be Perdition.

Affectionately your nephew,

GEORGE BURNETT.

(This completes Burnett's letters as delivered to me the next day after the arrival at Bombay. What follows is the addenda to the story sent to Manila eight weeks later, accompanying the letter giving permission to use the manuscript on the terms detailed in the first chapter of this book.)

THE AUTHOR.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE ADDENDA

Bombay, October 28, 1913.

MY DEAR UNCLE:—We landed in Bombay about three o'clock in the afternoon of the 26th day of October. The first rim of the new moon was due to appear that evening. I evaded Young by pleading my desire for absolute rest. While yet the sun was full an hour from the horizon, I strolled down to the beach and along it. Early as I was, I found others had preceded me and soon the ocean's shore was lined with richly dressed Parsee ladies and well-groomed Parsee men.

As the sun sank into the sea and the slender, silver thread of the moon appeared on the horizon, they congregated for their religious rites.

A famous American who was there that evening described this ceremony in an English newspaper the next day:

"How inexpressibly sublime the scene appeared

to me, and how insignificant and unworthy of the Unknown seemed even our cathedrals when compared with this looking up through Nature unto Nature's God! I stood and drank in the serene happiness which seemed to fill the air. I have seen many modes and forms of worship—some disgusting, others saddening, a few elevating, when the organ pealed forth its tones, but all poor in comparison with this."

When the services closed I wended my way back to the city streets and to the spacious yard, from out the depths of which, over a year ago, came the voice of the girl who meant all of life to me now.

I was very heavy-hearted, for I was filled with all sorts of sinister forebodings.

Through tropical flowers and plants I went until I came to the front door of a large and beautiful white house.

It was quite western in its architecture and equipment, except that it had the red tiled roof so characteristic of Bombay buildings. I rang the bell and a native servant responded. I asked for the Parsee lady and gave him my card. He smiled graciously when he glanced at the name, bade me enter and showed me to a seat in the spacious drawing room, and then disappeared.

The attitude of the servant reassured me. Nothing tragic appeared to have happened. I waited several minutes but no one came. I was again becoming concerned and worried, when the door back of me opened suddenly, and the rich voice of Ina Vive Constant filled the room.

I don't know what she said or how she said it. I don't care to know what she said. I only know that she came to me with outstretched arms and glowing eyes, and, as we embraced and my lips met hers in one long, lingering love kiss,—the whole world stood still and I *knew* I possessed the pure and undying first and only love of a noble and superior woman.

And I blessed the darling mother and the wise and devoted uncle who gave me the being and the youthful environment and information that made such a love possible.

With eternal affection and gratitude,

Your nephew,

GEORGE BURNETT.

THE END

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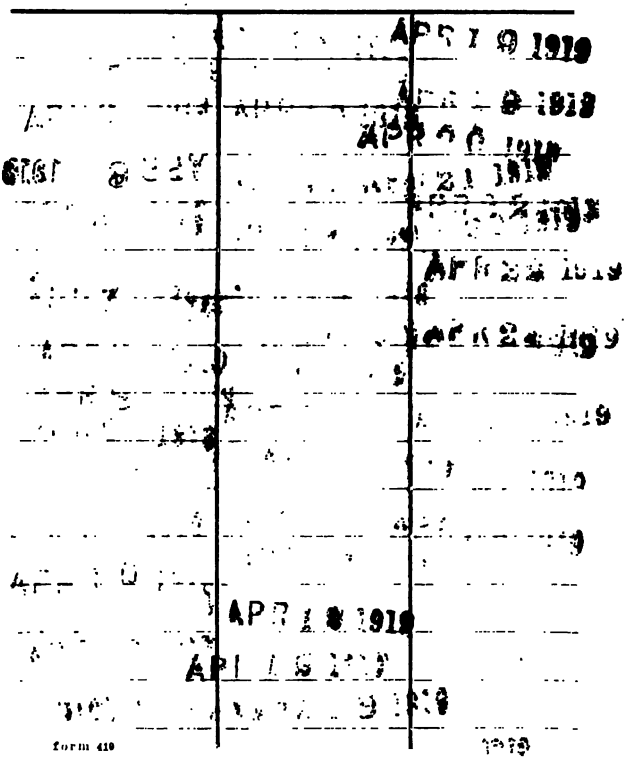
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